

# COLLECTED ESSAYS

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ethical Studies	= <i>E.S.</i>
Principles of Logic	= <i>L.</i>
Appearance and Reality	= <i>A.R.</i>
Essays on Truth and Reality	= <i>T.R.</i>
Collected Essays	= <i>E.</i>

(A Roman numeral following E indicates the particular Essay)

Mind	= <i>M.</i>
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(The Old and New Series in 'Mind' are indicated by o.s. and n.s., and the volume by a Roman numeral)

*References to the author's works* are to the latest editions, though references (preceded by the sign =) to the earlier editions are added for the convenience of some readers.

*References by the author to the works of other writers* have been retained without alteration.



## XXI

### IN WHAT SENSE ARE PSYCHICAL STATES EXTENDED?

[*First published in MIND, N.S. iv, No. 14, 225-35. April, 1895.*]

THE question asked above may be met by a general denial. Psychical states, we may be assured, are not extended in any sense or at all. But this denial, if taken absolutely, could not be sustained. It seems open to an objection such as the following: If what is psychical is not extended then nothing is extended, for in the end everything must be psychical. And at least in some quarters it appears doubtful if such an objection could be met. But, to pass by this argument in its more sweeping and more assailable form, I will go on to urge it in a shape which to me seems conclusive. The psychical existence of extension may be wholly denied, yet the idea and the perception of extension must at the same time be affirmed. And any such position, I would submit, is inconsistent with itself. For the perception and idea are admitted themselves to be psychical and, if this perception and idea in no sense possessed extension, in what possible way (we must urge) could they represent it? And since to this question I have not yet found a reply, I must conclude that in some sense the psychical can be extended.

But ideas and perceptions, I shall be told, are not what they signify. It is true, I reply, that their meaning and their existence are different. But if this difference is taken to preclude sameness, the statement would become false. For a thing, though the same, becomes different also when diversely applied. And a feature of content, which makes the meaning of an idea, must, I presume, in order to do this, be present psychically. Thus, for example, the idea of my horse in a sense has extension, and this idea also is a psychical state. And when you ask me to believe that a psychical state may have somehow extension, while in no

sense whatever it is extended, I cannot follow you. For how far and in what sense that which has extension itself is extended, I propose to discuss. But to deny extension wholly and altogether I find to be unmeaning. And if I am asked whether the extension of my horse exists also in my soul, that inquiry in no degree tends to stagger me. These extensions are different and they must be different since, and so far as, they belong to and qualify what is different. But for all their differences, they are also and as well most assuredly the same extension.\* And if they are not to be the same, I in my turn ask how my idea can be a true one. Nay, without extension in some sense, how could a false idea even succeed in looking like truth? For to appear with something or as something which one in no sense has or is, if we admit it to be possible, is at least a thing which calls for some explanation.<sup>1</sup> And in default of this explanation we must assert that psychical states in some sense may be extended.<sup>2</sup> Let us endeavour further to define the sense of that extension.

There is an obvious difference between extension as it is in the soul and extension as it is in the physical world. For the movement and the collision of material things is not present in the soul, or rather is not present in its full and complete nature. And we find this at once if we endeavour *a priori* to demonstrate about matter. So far as mere space is concerned we appear to possess its nature inwardly, and hence to be able within ourselves to control and to develop its essence. But clearly no such claim could be upheld with regard to body, and to anticipate or even to demonstrate the various qualities of nature seems quite impracticable. Observation and experiment have taught us connexions which internally we can repeat, and which partly we can combine and can rearrange. But we are not able (as with mere space) to experiment internally, for we do not possess the complete nature of the

<sup>1</sup> Compare here *E.* xix. 334-5.

<sup>2</sup> Whether extension is a primitive or an acquired perception seems a consideration not relevant. For in any case it exists, and that existence is all that need here concern us.

physical process. Thus by sheer hallucination we may even actually perceive a physical world, but no mere hallucination would supply us with fresh physical facts. We should be dealing always with but our old acquired material, and presumably we could not, apart from accident, gain from a sheer hallucination new information about nature.

On the other hand to deny that in the soul we have at all the extension which meets us in nature would be mistaken. We certainly have this same extension and can repeat the process of its happening, but we can do this only within limits, partially, and up to a certain point. For when we perceive a sequence in nature, we perceive in this but one feature of a whole. The result observed does not follow really and in fact except from the complete conditions, and to experience these complete conditions is quite impossible. The essential process, so far as known by us, is gathered piecemeal, constructed ideally, and put together in the abstract. And hence our essential process, as such, is not that actual process which produces the perceived result. Or rather it is the actual process, but so incomplete as to be actual no longer. In this sense we may deny that the physical extended moves and happens in a soul. For it happens there not integrally but merely in certain fragmentary aspects. And we possess it not bodily but only in schematic outline.

Now to object that in the psychical world also we, sometimes or always, have sequences, the full conditions of which we cannot experience, would be irrelevant. For in any case in the soul we find no world or order of spatial happening such as we ascribe to nature. And however many psychical sequences may remain incomprehensible, our conclusion remains. We are right to deny that the physical extended in its full process has psychical existence. Let us pass from this to another doubt which concerns us more.

One may reasonably deny that the physical extended essentially consists in its extendedness. The properties of the physical world follow, one may contend rather, only

in part from its mere extension, and from its mere extension, however well you knew that, you could not comprehend the process of nature's happening. But hence the extension of nature, and the order of nature so far as it follows from that extension, can (it may be held) after all be possessed by the soul and, in a word, be psychical. This is a grave question on which I must again touch lower down, but its full solution cannot be attempted here. And for our present purpose we may be content to leave the question unanswered. We may either say that psychically we cannot possess the complete nature of physical extension; or again we may conclude that, while we possess this, the physical extended has also an additional aspect, an aspect essential and beyond our psychical experience. In this latter case we must allow no essential difference between extension physical and psychical, and we must hold that the process of the physical extended, so far as extended, also happens partially in the soul. But in the former case physical extension itself will not be experienced by the soul except as defective in its essence. Psychical extension, in other words, will lack an integral feature owned by the extension which is physical. But with such refinements we perhaps need here concern ourselves no further. For it will be true in any case that up to a certain point we have psychically the same extension which qualifies nature. In any case the two will have some identity, and the doubt attaches merely to the point at which they diverge. Psychical and physical phenomena, in other words, to a certain extent will in any case share the same extension. But in one case the physical world will have that extension less fragmentary and more complete, while in the other case the physical world will, besides its extension, necessarily possess an additional factor not owned completely by the soul.<sup>1</sup> With this we

<sup>1</sup> I of course cannot raise here the question of the ultimate nature of the physical world, and ask whether and how far it exists outside souls. And whether in the last resort unperceived nature is even actually extended I again cannot here discuss. For the purpose of the text I have felt bound to assume that unperceived nature is extended.

may pass from a distinction which for our present purpose seems barren.

But if psychical states are extended, I may be told, absurd consequences will follow. For these states will then collide, if not with outer things, at least with each other. Nothing of the kind, I reply, need really take place. For even if we can assume of physical extensions that they all are comprised in and form parts of one extended world, such an assumption evidently becomes false when we carry it further. The extensions in the soul need have no spatial relation to the physical world, nor again amongst themselves need they be spatially related to one another. When any phenomena are related spatially they are *ipso facto* parts of one spatial whole—so much is certain. But that all things spatial must be spatially related to each other is not certain, but false. It is in fact a prejudice without any rational basis. The worlds of the *Arabian Nights* and of the *Pilgrim's Progress* have no spatial connexion either with each other or with the room in which I write. These worlds have a common unity, that is certain, but they are not contained in one space. And whatever may be the case with nature, in the soul there is an indefinite number of extensions, between which no spatial relation exists. Each of these states so far, we may say, has a world of its own. And to urge objections based on the infinite or the finite character of space would once more here be idle. For the assumption of spatial unity would not help us to dispose of any one of such difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

The soul contains extensions and it contains many extensions, but the soul is not extended. We have here in principle, I believe, the answer to our main inquiry. For a thing may have qualities that are spatial and yet itself need not enter space, and the denial of this truth once more would rest on mere prejudice. Certainly, to be extended cannot mean merely to own an unrelated spatial adjective. It must mean on the contrary to have a spatial relation beyond oneself, and hence oneself to pass into and

<sup>1</sup> On all these questions I may refer the reader for some further discussion to my *Appearance and Reality*, chapter xxii.

belong as a part to an extended whole. But, this being admitted, the question is whether, without itself being extended, a thing cannot possess extension—whether, that is, we cannot say of a thing that it is extended in certain respects, though not extended as a whole. And the answer, I presume, must turn on the position which in the thing's essence we have assigned to extension. If, that is, we make extension predominate in the thing's nature, and treat the other qualities as subordinate to, and as following from, this special aspect, the thing itself clearly will have to enter a spatial world. But if on the other hand extension had no privileged or primary rank, if the thing's other attributes are in no way secondary or subordinate to that, but on the contrary perhaps superior in amount and in value—then clearly the thing itself will not be extended. The extension will qualify one or more aspects and adjectives of the thing, and these adjectives certainly will become parts each in its own spatial whole. But the rest of the thing's nature will remain aloof. You cannot so attach this outstanding nature to the extension as to carry it, and with it the whole thing, into a spatial order. The whole as a whole therefore will *have* extension, but—except in relation to one or more of its adjectives and just so far as they go—the whole will not *be* extended. If any of its states are spatial, then, in respect of these states and so far, the thing must be spatial. But whether it is spatial otherwise, and taken as a whole, will depend on the conditions. And the question is decided in each case by the relative importance of the thing's adjectives and by the position amongst these which extension occupies.

Now in the physical world, rightly or wrongly, extension may be taken as primary and predominant. And, if so, nature will all be extended, and also, perhaps, will have to be viewed as enclosed in one space. The position of such qualities as, say, smells and sounds will remain irregular, for, though localized, they are not properly extended. Still extension, rightly or wrongly, has been given a superior standing. It is not one adjective on a level with others, nor can its connexion with nature's

essence be taken as mediate and conditioned. Nature *has* odours and tastes—here and there and under such or such conditions; but you can hardly say that nature *is* odorous or savoury in the sense in which you say it *is* extended. For every distinct partial aspect within a whole is possessed by that whole, but they cannot, each alike, be said to qualify the whole directly and simply.

But when we pass to the soul the position and rank of extension is altered. It cannot any longer be taken as predominant or primary, but has on the contrary to accept a secondary, if not an occasional, place. It is, we may say, undermined and overpowered by other adjectives. And hence the psychical whole *is* not extended. It merely has extension here and there, indirectly and as a quality of some of its states, between which states there need be no spatial relation at all. The psychical field of struggle is no space except by a metaphor, and the weapons of the contest are not velocity or mass. Nay, the extended itself, so far as psychically it competes, does not compete primarily by means of and through its relative extension.<sup>1</sup> It struggles, as all psychical elements struggle, by intensity, by pleasure and pain, and by the associative force of content. The soul has extension (we have seen), for it has 'states' which are extended. And as a whole the soul possesses the adjectives owned by its partial states, and, in these respects and so far, the soul itself *is* extended. But to omit 'here and there' and 'in this and that point', and to predicate extension of the whole soul without condition and at large, would be gravely erroneous. It would in fact be as absurd as it would be to call the soul *sapid* or *odorous*.

And this distinction between what the soul has and that which it is—the distinction between what the soul is itself, as a whole or directly, and what again it is indirectly and merely in respect of its parts—this distinction I take to be the solution of our chief problem.

<sup>1</sup> So far as they are related spatially, extensions in the soul can struggle for the same place. The basis of the struggle is here the partial identity of their content. It is in short a case of 'contraries'.

I will notice finally some minor difficulties connected with the subject, though, as it seems to me, they do not affect our main conclusion. Not all extensions in the soul, we saw, are related spatially. But where they are so and are combined to form one space, is this unity itself extended? Now, if the several extensions really are imaged as coming together, their unity clearly has also become spatial, and as a psychical state the whole perception is so far extended. But where we think not in concrete imagery but abstractly, this result must be modified. Having the idea of several spaces we then may think of them as combined and as one, and we may do this without properly representing their union as spatial. For we may apply to them an abstract and extraneous idea of unity. And, if so, the resulting synthesis may itself not actually be spatial, though always tending to become so.<sup>1</sup> Let us go on to consider another minor problem.

Let us suppose that, besides perceiving the place where I am, I think of other extended objects both present and past, objects some real and some imaginary. Now I may have several of these objects, I presume, at once, and may also consider them together. But where things in any sense are taken together, that unity is of course a psychical state, and in the present case the question is whether we are to call this state extended. It is probably not extended always, but, with some persons at least, it always tends

<sup>1</sup> Even if the idea of unity which is applied is spatial, it remains doubtful how far the several extended objects become parts of one extension. If, for instance, I am asked to think of a number of bodies each of a different colour, these bodies being scattered in space or divided also in time, and then am asked to think of these bodies as close together in space—what, I suppose, happens is this. I apply a more or less abstract spatial scheme of diversity in unity, and I identify the coloured bodies with the diversities of this spatial scheme. Now, if my thought is rapid and remains abstract, need it imply the mental juxtaposition of the various colours? And if not, how far and in what sense have the coloured objects become parts of one new extended state? We must reply, I think, that so far the bodies have not become parts of such a state, for they have come together spatially only from one side of their being. On the other hand, this abstract unity tends naturally to become more concrete and to pass into actual mental juxtaposition of the colours also.



to become so, and all objects thought of together tend to become parts even of one visual field. But the whole question, however interesting, has no bearing on our principal result. For the unity and synthesis of these several objects certainly will not consist always in their presence within one visual field, but that presence rather may be itself a symptom and consequence of their unity. And my whole psychical state at any moment is of course never extended. The background of feeling, before which every object must come, consists largely of elements which not in any aspect are extended. And the unity of feeling is of course itself not spatial. With these brief remarks I must pass from problems which seem here not in place.

The result of our whole inquiry is briefly this. The unity of the soul is not spatial, nor as a whole is the soul extended. But here and there, without any doubt, it has features which are extended. And the soul is extended in respect of these features, while you consider it merely so far and regard it fragmentarily. But to predicate extension of the soul, when the soul is taken together and as one, is quite impossible. That is no better than it would be to term the soul acid or salt or fragrant. For in the soul extension is not a universal head or law, under which adjectives fall; and, as an adjective, it is not all-pervasive. It is really but one among a number of predicates, its position is partial and its rank is secondary.

I may be allowed perhaps to append some remarks on 'Extensivity' and on my difficulties with regard to it. I was long ago convinced of two things. (a) We cannot, I believe, understand how the perceived spatial world arises (if it does arise) from what is quite non-spatial; and (b) the spatial perception, however it arises, cannot have at first the relational character of developed space (*E.* xii. 222-3, note 1). Hence it seems to me proper to postulate a mode of perception which gives, on the one hand, more than mere volume and, on the other hand, less than space. And yet extensivity, as it is offered me, I cannot accept for the following two reasons. (i) I am not able myself to find

extensity in observation anywhere as a fact. (ii) I cannot identify everywhere volume with extensity, so as to deny all volume which is not 'extensive'. On the contrary I take extensity to be a specialized volume. And, though I probably have failed to understand the position of Mr. Ward or of Professor James, and though I am aware that with regard to extensity they seem, at least in part, to differ very seriously, they appear to me to agree in what perhaps are two mistakes. Both seem to me to deny in effect all non-extensive volume, and to claim also to observe extensity as a fact.

(i) Whether extensity can somewhere be observed is perhaps a question of little moment, and on my own failure I should certainly not venture to stand. But since my own difficulty may be more than personal, I will endeavour to state it. And my experience is this. Whenever I observe I either get something which seems to imply space right out, or else I get something which seems not to have even extensity. I can find volume everywhere—that I do not doubt—but not all volume appears to me to come possessed of side-by-sideness, or even to have features joined and divided by any fixed order of relations. When on the other hand I dwell on my perception, it tends to become distinct spatially, without, so far as I see, becoming merely extensive. And my perception thus grows not spatial merely, but spatial even visually. A compound smell or a confused organic sensation, nay, any kind of diversity and every possible distinction, in the end, when I dwell on it, becomes localized somehow in a visual field. And in short, while I observe, I find no way from an awkward dilemma. I must hold that all observed diversity and every distinction involves a character which is spatial right out, and in my own case visually spatial, though the elements themselves (e.g. smells) need not be extended. Or else, if I may take this character as but imposed by the process of my attending, and if I may deny that my mere perception of volume possesses it, then extensity itself seems gone with this justified removal. Or at least, while I keep to the observed facts, I myself cannot find it. I

start with something which appears to be not so much as extensive, and I end with something which seems to imply what is fatally more, and during my progress I cannot make the required observation. And hence I should prefer to accept extensity as a postulate, if it were correctly formulated so as to fill the void stage in the development of space.

(ii) From this I pass to the second objection. Extensity, it seems to me, is a special kind of volume, nor could I deny the existence of volume without extensity. To such a denial I am in principle perhaps not opposed. Nay, if I had to assert that no diversity could be anywhere perceived without the help of spatial marks of distinction, that would make but little difference in principle to any views I entertain. But I think such a doctrine is mistaken, and in the same way I must decline to identify volume with extensity. If I take for instance my whole condition at some one moment, or if I take some group of organic sensations, or again for example some complex smell, I am led to a very different result. In these cases I am aware of volume, of an uncounted plural whole, I certainly perceive a muchness, but on the other side I cannot predicate extensity. I cannot find side-by-sideness, nor can I find a fixed inter-related arrangement of any kind. There are qualitative differences within a whole, but these differences seem not, even as qualities, to have an ordered position and situation among themselves. They are neither continuous in this sense, nor are they continuous again as showing indefinite internal divisibility. They are no serial field, in and on which motions, if only they could supervene, would find positions and so generate space. I at least cannot observe these characters given everywhere as fact, and I am therefore forced to suspect one of two things. Either these characters have been transferred from elsewhere into the facts, or I, as is likely enough, have not understood what extensity is to mean.

And since, where one does not understand, it is better not to insist on criticism, and since some obscurity seems to beset the use of 'volume', I may perhaps do best if I attempt to indicate what I myself mean by it. In the first

place 'massiveness' seems not synonymous, for, if I imagine myself a balloon or a cloud, I am voluminous but not massive. 'Oppressiveness' again would refer to a certain effect on me, and the more oppressive (a fur rug) is not always the more voluminous (a down coverlet). These terms may be dismissed as being clearly not the same as mere volume. It is volume where (*a*) positively I have a whole containing a diversity felt as a many and much of one somewhat, and (*b*) negatively it is *mere* volume so far as here I do not count any units or pass discursively through any relations. Again, to have *mere* volume strictly, I should not view my 'much' comparatively and as being or as having more than something else is or has; and further, although the 'much' has a quality, I must not take that quality as a degree, with a place, that is, on a qualitative scale dependent on quantity. There are comparative volumes of course and there are of course degrees in volume, but these are special developments of the two undeveloped aspects of mere volume. Mere volume has a manyness which neither is counted nor compared, and it has a quality of muchness which is not taken on its own scale as a more or less of itself. The aspects of volume, which we might call its intensiveness and its extent, are present and given, but are not distinguished and developed. And after that result has taken place, I have still mere volume so far as I disregard the development and distinction.

Now it does not seem to me that this mere perception of an uncounted plural whole need imply side-by-sideness or fixed interrelation or serial arrangement or, in any proper sense, continuity external and internal. Space, in short, has volume, but volume need not be spatial or even have 'extensity'. And if I am wrong in this, yet the question calls, I think, for some inquiry.

With that inquiry perhaps might go a more careful treatment of the connexion between amount and degree. And as a possible help, and by way of supplement to a former paper (*E. xix*), I will venture to add some remarks not original nor perhaps all relevant.

Psychical states must all from the first be more and less of one somewhat, but the perception of quantity is rightly placed later than that of quality, if, that is, quality is taken at its rudest stage. The sense of something other and different comes, I believe, before that of more and less. But I certainly am not here attempting to derive or in any way to explain the origin of quantity. Quantity (however it comes) is another kind of change within the quality. When somewhat grows more or less, it becomes otherwise without ceasing to be the same quality or thing. If red changes to green that is an altered quality, though I do not deny that quantity may also be involved in the change. But when red changes to more of red or redder, while remaining red, that is what we call quantity. And we are led to distinguish further because 'more red' is ambiguous. It may stand for merely more of the same red, or it may mean that the red, while still red and while so far still the same, is also changed within itself and is now more or less as red. The redness itself here is opened to contain the diversity of an internal scale. Thus the more and less affected first only that which is red, but afterwards we have a more and less within redness itself.

Now it is not uncommon to speak of intensity and of extent as being aspects quite diverse. And when a greater extent of a quality, such as warmth, is in fact taken wrongly for a higher degree, we are told that volume and intensity are here confused or are not distinguished. But this explanation, though not untrue, seems partly incorrect. The real mistake lies, I think, not in failure to distinguish between extent and degree, but in failure to distinguish between two degrees or two amounts of different kinds. And I will endeavour briefly to make this clear.

Every perception of quantity, whether it is a perception of amount or degree, must possess the two aspects of extent and intenseness. Even in the case of degree the perception must contain an internal plurality, and even in the case of extent it must have as a whole a special quality (*E. xix*). There is a difference in the two cases, but the difference lies in the 'that', of which we have amount

or degree. If you take red and increase its degree, preserving the same spatial area, you gain more units, but more units of red and not of spatial area. If you keep the redness the same, while the spatial area is increased, you have a higher degree not of redness but of area which is red. And hence—since in each case there is an increase both in intensity and in extent, and since both increases come to us alike as a moreness of red—a confusion between them seems only natural. Nay, the distinction between these aspects is presumably a late acquisition. But in theory this distinction can be turned into a hard division with erroneous results.

Volume itself is most certainly capable of degree. If you have a coloured surface which is red, that, even if you disregard its redness, has volume, and corresponding to that volume the surface as a whole has a quality. And if the coloured surface is increased by an addition which is not red but green, you will have an increase in volume and also in quality. Your perception will grow in intensity as it grows in volume, though neither this volume nor this intensity will belong specially to red or green. And then, coincident with and superimposed on this double growth, may come an increase in redness or greenness also two-sided. And all these changes, which partly are independent, partly must influence one another and result often in confusion or even in positive mistakes.

I do not know how far such remarks are relevant to the question in hand. They may serve at least to suggest that the connexion between quality, quantity, and degree is not simple, and cannot be disposed of easily. On the positive nature of extensity I have indeed said almost nothing. It has to be postulated and is not observed, and, while less than space, it is certainly more than mere volume. I have said no more because I doubt if I have more to say. And with what class or classes of sensation we have to postulate this character, is an important question which I have not touched. Nay, even that which I have laid down I am prepared to find mistaken. Every sort of diversity, after all, and every distinction may imply

space proper, or, if not that, may imply something more or less spatial; and this last character again may be given in actual observation.<sup>1</sup> Volume without extensity may in short turn out to be an error. But whatever conclusion on these points may prove true in the end, the way to it, I am sure, is not short or easy. The introduction of extensity, in brief, I think has been useful, but extensity would be more useful if it were more thoroughly explained and discussed. By such an explanation I at least should expect to profit.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Sully (*Human Mind*, i. 95) seems to accept extensity only as hypothetical. If so, I do not understand what position he gives to volume and massiveness. In rejecting extensity wholly (*A.R.* 30 = 35) I had in mind solely the fact as supposed to be observed. The remark was not intended to exclude a hypothetical form of space-sensation (cp. *E.* xii. 222, note 1).

A DEFENCE OF PHENOMENALISM IN  
PSYCHOLOGY

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THE object of this paper is to defend 'phenomenalism' in psychology, and to defend it mainly by endeavouring to fix its true sense and by clearing this from mistakes and perversions. That phenomenalism is the one rational attitude in psychology I am as convinced as I am convinced that in metaphysics it is senseless. And phenomenalism I may here provisionally define as the confinement of one's attention to events with their laws of coexistence and sequence. It involves the complete abjuration of any attempt to ask in psychology for ultimate truth or consistency, and it involves the adoption as relative truth of whatever serves best to explain the detailed course of facts or those particular ways in which things happen. And, though I am well aware that I have no right to speak for any one but myself, I believe that the great body of psychologists desires and is anxious to accept phenomenalism in this sense and to relegate other inquiries about the soul to metaphysics. For, if we do not accept phenomenalism, I can perceive but one alternative. There will be in principle no division at all between psychology and metaphysics. One will be unable, at least on any principle, to limit the scope of an inquiry into the nature of the soul, and to refuse to be distracted by never-ending discussion of first principles. However anxious a man may be to confine himself to the mere observation and explanation of psychical events, he will be liable at every point to objections based on the question as to ultimate truth. And apart from phenomenalism we have nothing to justify us if we refuse to answer and to defend ourselves on this ground; while, if we do not refuse, the consequences at once are disastrous. You in particular may be sure that in meta-



physics you have the truth, but then another man may not think so, and experience shows that the one probably will not convince the other. And the only reason, it seems to me, why things have gone as well as they have gone, is that psychologists have in practice, but as a rule upon no clear principle, confined to a large extent the scope of their inquiries within the limits of phenomenalism. To lay down and to defend a principle of such limitation is the object of this article.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I must notice here an attempt to limit the scope of psychology by defining its standpoint as 'individualistic'. I have remarked elsewhere (*A.R.* 273 = 309) that this attempt is in principle mistaken. It would be absurd to suppose that metaphysical questions cannot be raised from an individualistic standpoint. Hence, whatever the phrase may be meant to mean, it as it stands is useless. And I cannot think that Dr. Stout is successful so far as he adopts this formula, or generally in his definition of the sphere of psychology (*Analytic Psychology*, i, pp. 1-12). He, in my opinion, fails to demarcate psychology from metaphysics, which latter he defines in what seems to me an erroneous manner. It is indeed possible that Dr. Stout's view and mine may be really the same, but, if so, I cannot think that his view has been clearly formulated. Psychology, he says, investigates the history of the individual consciousness, and it is not concerned with validity or worth, but with existence, and with what appears to the individual mind. But I cannot see how that by itself is enough to divide it from metaphysics. The real question surely is as to *how* it is to study the history and processes of the individual mind. Is psychology limited to phenomenalism in the sense which I have given to that term, or may it go beyond this, and if so how far? Dr. Stout, it seems to me, fails altogether to answer this vital question.

I will briefly illustrate my meaning. I may wish, for instance, in studying the history of the individual mind, to ask fundamental questions about the relation of its plurality to its unity, and also to discuss the ultimate reality of its time-process. Is anything of this kind to be permitted in psychology? Or I may wish to maintain the doctrine that the history of the individual is in a sense explained by a fundamental underlying volition or conation. Are we as psychologists to debate this? One man again may propose to reduce all Association to Redintegration, and another may seek to stop him by arguing that really there is no identity in things but only resemblance. Is this plea to be admitted in psychology and discussed there, or, if not, on what ground? Now to reply that psychology is not concerned with the validity of cognitions would, it seems to me, be idle. If you mean by cognitions the cognitions of that individual consciousness which we are studying, that surely would be irrelevant, for we are not, I presume, supposing that this particular consciousness is entertaining these

The presumption in favour of that limitation seems to me, I confess, to be so overwhelming that my best course will be simply to try to defend the doctrine of phenomenalism against objections and misconceptions. But let me first attempt to state its nature more accurately.<sup>1</sup> Psychology is to be concerned with psychological events, and such an event is whatever is immediately experienced, either as a whole or as an integral aspect of a whole, and is not for the purpose in hand taken otherwise than as an adjective happening to and qualifying a particular soul. These facts are events because they happen in time, each with a place in the order of the 'real world' in general, and of this one soul in particular. On the other hand, by their 'happening' is not meant that they have no duration, for, to be events at all, they certainly must have some duration. But further psychology is not confined merely to these several events and aspects of events, and it has also to study them in their relations of sequence and coexistence within one soul. These relations, so far as they fall outside immediate experience, are of course themselves not events in the sense of facts immediately experienced, and again their laws are not events at all. But the scope of these laws on the other hand is strictly limited, and they are and remain special cognitions about itself. But if on the other side you possibly meant that psychology is not to judge of truth at all, that would be obviously untrue, and certainly no one could maintain it. It is quite true that psychology has not to investigate the truth of the cognitions of the mind which it studies, as such, but I wholly fail to understand how, with this, we have divided it from metaphysics. But I should add that I probably have not understood what Dr. Stout means by metaphysics.

The vital question seems to be this: Does Dr. Stout mean to confine psychology to events and the laws of events? Does he mean to assert that, since psychology is not concerned with more than this, it is at liberty to use fictions, and that the question of truth is not to be raised in it except so far as truth means whatever serves best to explain the course of mere events? I cannot understand how it is that, if Dr. Stout really holds these doctrines, he should not have expressed them more clearly. But if Dr. Stout does not hold them, what alternative does he offer? To me it remains unintelligible, and I must therefore persist in repeating that there is no alternative between accepting the view which I advocate and having in principle no boundary at all between psychology and metaphysics.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here *E.* xii. 205-7.

mere laws of the bare coexistence and sequence of events. With regard to the meaning of one soul or subject, that, so far as I see, must be fixed arbitrarily. In the psychology of man and of the higher animals I myself think it would be most convenient to fix it by the identity of the organism, and to treat a plurality of souls within that—if indeed a plurality ever really happens—as the adjectives of one soul. The mere course of psychical events, as such, happening within a single organism, and the laws of coexistence and sequence between these events, will then be the object of psychology. And within psychology no further question, and in especial no question about ultimate truth, is to be entertained.

I will at once endeavour to explain this further by defending it briefly against a series of objections. I will not try to take these in a systematic order or to keep them wholly distinct, and I shall for the most part state them in my own way.

(i) It may be objected, first, that the soul really is one, and that on the view of phenomenalism it has no unity. To this I reply that it has all the unity which is wanted for our purpose. I do not indeed say that its continuity in time is unbroken, nor is there any need for me to say this; and again the history of the soul as a whole is of course not immediately experienced by it. But the soul has certainly an identity in quality which appears in the series and the nature of which can be studied.<sup>1</sup> And besides qualitative identity it has relations of coexistence and sequence which phenomenalism takes as real,<sup>2</sup> and it has also laws of those relations. And with so much the soul certainly has a real history. The question of its ultimate real unity is not recognized by phenomenalism, but I cannot see that this prevents us from treating its history as one.

<sup>1</sup> The possibility of an entire defect in this I do not discuss. I do not myself care what answer psychology gives in this case to the question of unity and identity.

<sup>2</sup> Under this head of relations will fall any piece of psychical duration, beyond what is immediately experienced, that psychology may have occasion to consider. •

(ii) 'But in the soul, then, at any one time there will be for phenomenalism nothing but what is experienced at that time.' Not so, I reply, and this is a sheer mistake. For phenomenalism the soul is at any one time what is experienced at that time, but it is also more. For it is qualified also by the past which really belongs to it, and that past belongs to it not merely as what it has been, but as what it now is. The soul in other words is the dispositions which it has acquired.<sup>1</sup> And if it is objected that with this we have gone beyond phenomenalism, I reply that once more the objection rests on a mistake. For the dispositions are simply statements about the happening of events within the phenomenal series—assertions as to what will happen, or rather would happen, under certain conditions more or less unknown. They, in other words, are tendencies or individual laws. Certainly if phenomenalism professed to know the ultimate truth about these dispositions, and in the end really to understand them, it would end in failure and would also be quite false to itself. But, on the other hand, professing entire ignorance and the completest indifference as to their real nature, it uses these tendencies as facts, and in this it follows the example of every limited science. The dispositions are not phenomena, but they are legitimate fictions used to explain the happening of phenomena.

I will try to put the same thing in a different way. In

<sup>1</sup> If we recognize native psychical dispositions, a point on which I wish to say and to imply nothing, these again will qualify the soul. They will be something, the real nature of which psychology does not discuss, but which it expresses as tendencies—statements as to what will happen under certain conditions. It is better to understand that these are not to be taken to exist before there is a beginning of actual psychical fact. Anything before this will be not a psychical but a physical disposition. It is, I should say, not convenient to assume a soul there, where there not only is (as we assume) nothing psychical now, but where that has not existed and may not be about to exist. The inconvenience is less in a case where we suppose a temporary but complete 'suspension' of psychical life. But even in this case, if any one insists that we have no right in psychology, during such a suspension, to speak of an actual psychical disposition, I cannot say he is wrong. At any rate, if we do this, we should not forget that we are making use of a certain licence.

metaphysics I recognize in the end no distinction between the experienced and experience, and any attempt to draw such a distinction I consider to be in the end mistaken and futile. And hence there is naturally no readier way of proving my metaphysical views to be absurd than to assume dogmatically that this distinction holds good in metaphysics. But in psychology, since there we are not concerned with what is true in the end, I consider that this distinction is both justifiable and necessary. Beside that which at any one time is experienced, you have also the thing to which the experience belongs. And far from denying this, I have always taken it as a matter which is even obvious.<sup>1</sup> But for psychology this thing is nothing beyond the history and the group of tendencies which have just been mentioned. For more is not wanted, and therefore more is not admissible at least within psychology.

(iii) 'But in the experienced', it may be said, 'there is more than events, for there are ideas and judgements about objects, and these surely are not events.' But we must, I answer, here distinguish. To say that ideas and judgements do not happen at a certain time, and that in this sense they fail to be occurrences, seems clearly contrary to fact. And again it would surely be once more contrary to fact to say that, when they happen (since they do happen), they are not also felt to happen in the soul and are not experienced as my states. But so far clearly they are events. The reality to which the ideal content is referred, that ideal content and its reference—everything in short is present in my feeling. Everything is thus so far an event which has a place in my history and is predicable of me. That which is not so predicable is the mere connexion of the ideal content with the reality, so far as that connexion is taken by itself, and so far as abstraction

<sup>1</sup> I think that it is perhaps best to call this thing the soul, but I have no objection to the use of 'subject' or even of 'self' so long as it is clearly understood that you are not at once from these terms to draw certain conclusions, which I think quite false, about 'object' or 'not-self'. Another kind of mistake would be to refuse to recognize any psychical subject other than the body.

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is made of any other aspect. Certainly, then, I agree that, so far as this abstraction is maintained, we have not to do with an event in my soul, but I add also that we have to do with something which falls outside of psychology. On the other hand, the idea or the judgement, if you take it in any fuller sense, is assuredly a psychical event. You may go on to urge, if you please, that at any rate cognition proper is not explicable; but that is a point to be discussed within psychology, and at any rate here it is perfectly irrelevant.<sup>1</sup> However much 'a thing is inexplicable, that hardly proves that it does not happen and is no event.

A truth, we may say, is no truth at all unless it happens in a soul and is thus an event which appears in time. As it there exists, and as by existing there it influences the future history of that soul, it is a matter for psychology, and for the psychology that confines itself strictly to phenomenalism. But as anything less than this or anything more than this it does not fall within psychology, that is, if there are to be any limits set to psychology at all.

'But', it may be further said, 'let us take such a case as the following: A mind may make the Deity its object and may so, as we say, be "converted". Now the Deity is not an event, and is not so thought of, and does not in that character influence the mind. But yet this influence, whatever else it may be, is clearly psychological, and at the same time falls outside your psychology.' But no, I reply, this is once more nothing but misunderstanding and confusion. The Deity is not a mere event of course, and of course the Deity is really present in the mind that makes

<sup>1</sup> If I speculate psychologically about myself, it may be said in this case that psychology is concerned with my judgement in every sense, both as it exists and as it is true or false. Certainly this is so, but this once more would be irrelevant. Psychology is indeed interested here in the truth or falsehood of my judgement, as well as in its personal history and existence.

But, so far as concerned here with truth, psychology is concerned with it on its mine, but abstracts wholly from that side of it. And the truth thereto will so far not be a fact or object to psychology at all, but part of its any impersonal attitude towards its object and part of its own way of certain; with that.

it an object, and it is really present not as an event, and it really exercises in this non-temporal character psychological influence. This is all true, and yet it does not prevent something else from also being true. The presence in the soul of what is more than an event is certainly an event in that soul, and it is just because it is more than an event that in this case it is also more of an event in the history of that soul. And it is from this side of event that psychology has to do with the matter in its origin, and in its content so far as that qualifies the soul and also influences its future history. And all this falls within psychology as I have defined it. Psychology in short abstracts one side of the living whole and considers that apart. And its abstraction is the opposite of that abstraction which considers reality and truth apart from its appearance as event in the history of finite souls. And at least the abstraction made by psychology is both legitimate and necessary.

(iv) But a further objection has been made that there may be 'an unanalysable element in every psychical event', and yet that this is not an event. I must confess that I do not know what this objection means. It seems obvious that any aspect of any event will itself happen in time and will occupy time, and will thus itself, whenever it happens, be an event, however identical and however unanalysable it may remain, and whatever may be its duration. And, as I have replied elsewhere, 'changes in the intensity of the element would of course be events, as would be also the changes in the relation of that element to others' (*E.* xii. 205, note 2). And without attempting further to understand I must leave the matter thus. If this 'element' comes into the experienced at all it is certainly an event; but, if it is not in this sense an event or a phenomenal relation between events or a law of events, then it has no place within psychology. Let us pass on to a new objection.

(v) 'On your understanding of it,' it will be said, 'psychology is not true. We want to know the real truth about the soul, and we do not want to be put off with a shuffle of events which are abstractions and laws which are mere fictions.' Well then, I answer, by all means betake the

self to metaphysics, and gain of course what you seek there. But why, I urge, beside metaphysics may there not be a phenomenal psychology for persons like myself? 'But it will not be a science', you reply, 'if it does not give or seek the real truth.' I on the contrary should maintain that, if it gives or seeks the real truth, it is not a separate science at all. The very essence of such a science everywhere, I should say, is to employ half-truths, in other words to use convenient fiction and falsehood. And if you deny this in general, I will urge that at least it is so with psychology. Do you really mean to tell me that I am not to use and work with such ideas as a law of association, or a disposition, unless I can state these in a form which is ultimately and utterly true? It seems to me that such a question, when once raised and once understood, can only be answered in one way, and with this I will pass on.

(vi) 'But psychology cannot', I may be told, 'be a separate science, because these sciences each study separate compartments in the nature of things. On the other hand psychology has no such compartment, since there is nothing which falls outside the mind, and psychology therefore is not and cannot be a limited science.' Now what conclusion really should follow from the premise, if that were true, I will not discuss, for the whole premise in my opinion is radically false. A limited science is not in principle made what it is by having a compartment to itself, but by studying whatever it studies with a limited end and in a limited way. If you ask for instance unconditionally what are matter and force, that is a question for metaphysics. It becomes a question for physics if you ask what they are for a certain limited purpose and in a certain limited sense. And exactly the same thing in principle holds with the science of mind. If you ask about the soul unconditionally, it is the truth about its nature, the inquiry is metaphysical. But if, on the other hand, you confine yourself to a limited kind of question about the soul, that limitation is within empirical psychology and is the boundary of your science. And this in principle seems as clear as the evident and visible in practice. It is evident in



practice, I will venture to say, to any one not biased by theory that both practical and theoretical knowledge of the human soul is in fact actually possessed and used by those who are not metaphysicians. And an objection which would disprove the existence and possibility of this fact can hardly be well founded.

(vii) I will consider next a further objection, which possibly may be raised, in order in my reply to it to define my position more clearly. 'We admit', it may be said, 'your contention as to the object and scope of psychology. Its object, we agree, is to study the mere course of psychical events as such. It has to observe facts and to classify them, and then to seek to explain them—to explain, that is, not their ultimate nature, but their origin and the course which they take. It has to find, so far as is possible, the reason why they happen as they happen, and not the truth as to what they are. It seeks to discover the reason why we find this one rather than that one, and it does not study the real nature of all or of any, but only their nature so far as they qualify the history of the soul. But,' it may be added, 'agreeing with you so far, we are then driven to dissent very widely, for we think that more than mere phenomenal laws of happening is admissible, and is necessary for explanation, and we do not see on what principle you should object to more if it works.' Now, I reply, if this were said, and if this really were meant, I should be satisfied on the whole, because I think that the issue once raised in this way must be decided in favour of the cause which I adopt. But I will venture to add a few words in order to make the issue still clearer. If the end and scope of psychological explanation is defined as above, I do not object to *anything* that is offered, so long as and so far as it works, and so long as it is offered merely as something which works. But I must insist that nothing does work except so far as and so long as you use it as a mere law of happening. And hence I object to your 'more' because it is most certainly useless and almost certainly hurtful. Even if you had the absolute truth about the soul you could not for our purpose, so far as I see, use it as the

absolute truth, unless indeed we take the absolute truth to consist in mere laws of empirical happening. For it is only these laws which you can use here, however much more you may possess. And hence, if you will produce your 'more', I will undertake to show of it one of two things. It is useful in psychology just so far as it really is *not* used as more than, or as anything else than, a law of phenomena. Or otherwise it is really not useful in psychology at all, but is a false and mischievous pretence of knowledge.

The question of 'dispositions' will furnish, I think, a good illustration of my meaning. A disposition, I should say, in psychology is a mere way of stating that, when some things have happened, there will be a 'tendency' for other things to happen—we may expect them to happen, that is, under favourable conditions—and, so far as these tendencies are reduced to rule, they are used properly to explain the occurrence of particular facts. On the other hand, a psychologist may think that he knows what a disposition really is, and may be prepared with a more or less elaborate theory of its nature. Or again, without asserting knowledge, he may propose to use an avowed fiction. In either of these cases the test to be applied is the same. So far as the 'real truth' or the fiction serves as a law to explain the phenomenal sequence, it is admissible within psychology, and beyond that it is illegitimate.<sup>1</sup> A disposition for instance may be identified with a conation.<sup>2</sup> Now if and so far as by this identification we can better bring the particular facts under their laws of happening, the use of conation would be an explanation and would there-

<sup>1</sup> This attitude of avowed ignorance would of course by some psychologists be considered improper. Professor Ward (*Psychology*, p. 48), for instance, appears to assume it as self-evident that a disposition is an actual mental state, into the nature of which as psychologists we are bound to inquire. The account which he himself seems to give of it I have never found to be really intelligible. Mr. Stout (*Analytic Psychology*, i. 24-6) has criticized this account, but I could not say whether he has understood it rightly or not.

<sup>2</sup> A conation, that is, which is not actually experienced. To reduce a disposition to an actually experienced conation would of course, if practicable, be perfectly legitimate.

fore be justified as a working fiction. But otherwise its employment would be at best useless and would probably be hurtful. It would be hurtful because it tends to suggest that we understand and have explained facts, where we do not understand them and where no explanation has been given. But in this way attention may be diverted from the real problems to be solved.

You can only explain events, I would repeat, by the laws of their happening, and it does not matter for your purpose, so long as these laws work, whether they possess ultimate truth or are more or less fictitious and false. And anything other than these laws is useless at best, and therefore probably mischievous. And if the object and scope of psychology could be agreed on, and could be limited explicitly to the mere study and explanation of phenomena, I believe the rest of this conclusion would be readily evident. What in short we want in psychology are explanations that truly explain, and above all things we do not want true explanations.<sup>1</sup>

I have now tried to state in general what is to be understood by phenomenalism in psychology, and I have replied to certain objections as they have been made or as they have occurred to me. But there remain two other objections, more or less connected, which I will now proceed to notice. These objections are directed against a false view of phenomenalism, and themselves seem based on a radical misunderstanding of that term. They in fact rest in great part on doctrines which I should regard as wholly indefensible. These objections may be stated as follows:—'You have taken', it will be said, 'no account of a fundamental difficulty. In the first place mere phenomena are quite discrete and lack all continuity; and in the second

<sup>1</sup> I was glad to see that Wundt, in the fourth edition of his *Physiologische Psychologie*, ii. 283-4, appears to state definitely that his 'Apperception' is to be understood in psychology merely as the name of a class of psychical phenomena with its laws of happening. How far, so understood, Wundt's doctrine is tenable, and how far again his practice has been wholly consistent with his present statement, are questions I do not discuss.

place they at any rate are all mere perceptions merely given to the self. This, it is true, is not the case with regard to pleasure and pain, and as to whether these are or are not phenomena, we have our own view which you seem unable to understand. But at any rate, to speak in general, phenomena are mere objects, and the whole life of the self cannot be resolved into objects without a self, even when the laws of these objects are added *ad libitum*. And with your educational advantages,' it may even be added, 'it seems strange that you should not see this.' But I would reply that not only was I, if I may say so, brought up to see this, but I was brought up also to perceive something else as well. And the result is that I reject both the doctrines on which the objections are founded. Phenomena are not merely discrete nor again are all of them objects, and in short the true phenomenalism has been completely misunderstood and perverted.

I. On the mere discreteness of phenomena I need say very little, since truer views seem now steadily making their way. What is immediately experienced is not a collection of pellets or a 'cluster', as it used to be called, of things like grapes, together with other things called relations that serve as a kind of stalk to the cluster. On the contrary, what at any time is experienced is a whole with certain aspects which can be distinguished but, as so distinguished, are abstractions. Now each of these wholes is an event, and each of its aspects is an event, but that does not make them discrete. Every whole and its aspects as experienced has a certain duration and so some continuity in time, and it has some qualitative identity through different times actual and possible. And the duration that is experienced at one time is continuous with that which is experienced after it and before it. For, without our entering on any difficulties here as to the outward limitation of the experienced,<sup>1</sup> the identity of its content

<sup>1</sup> I refer here to the difficulty of drawing a line at which it ceases. The immediately experienced of course has limits, and it has very narrow ones. It is the same as the 'present' in the sense of what is directly felt in any one 'now'. To confuse this with the 'present' which is formed by any ideal

forces us to take it as continuous from experience to experience. In short, phenomena are legitimate abstractions, but they are not discrete reals.

And if they were merely discrete in and by themselves, then on the other side I would urge that the disease could have no possible remedy. The idea of a self or Ego joining together from the outside the atomic elements, and fastening them together in some miraculous way not involved in their own nature, is quite indefensible. It would be the addition of one more discrete to the former chaos of discretes, and it would still leave them all discrete. The idea of anything being made wholly from the outside into something else, whether by an Ego or by God Almighty, seems in short utterly irrational.

2. And as phenomena are not discrete, so phenomena are certainly not all objects.<sup>1</sup> This is another mistake, or in some cases it is another aspect of the same fundamental error. If all phenomena were objects or mere perceptions, and were confined to what in any sense is before the mind, then of course phenomenalism would be untenable. So understood it becomes a gross error which, if not now in

content, so long as that is taken to endure unbroken, would be a very serious error. Cf. here *A.R.* 463-6 = 523-6.

<sup>1</sup> If 'object' were understood in abstraction as *mere* object, then we may say that in strictness no psychical phenomenon would be an object. But this point need not be considered here. If I am asked what we are to call the experienced so far as it is not the object of a perception or cognition, I should say that the words 'feeling' and 'to feel' are obviously suggested. If we take the words in this sense we follow both the common usage and the literary associations of the English language. We violate both of these if we try to confine feeling to mere pleasure or pain, and a violation of this kind in the end must produce confusion. I think it was certainly ill-judged when instead of 'feeling' I used 'presentation' (*E.* xii), for that term tends, I presume, to suggest the presentation of an object. In fact, in *Mind* [o.s. xii. 564-75, 'Mr F. H. Bradley's *Analysis of Mind*', by James Ward] a laboured criticism of many pages was produced mainly to show that, presentation being so understood, what I had written was something like nonsense. If, on that understanding, it had not been nonsense, this would have been certainly something like a miracle, and certainly nothing to my credit. But in the present unsettled state of our terminology to assume of any writer that he uses words in the sense which we think the proper one seems likely to lead to waste of time.

principle exploded, will I imagine never be exploded, and far from maintaining phenomenalism in this sense, I consider it a thing with which one need hardly trouble oneself. But really phenomena are not all perceptions, they are not all objects given to a self, they do not all come before the mind, and to regard them so is, I venture to think, a radical mistake. And this mistake is, I venture also to think, very hurtful and a serious obstacle, wherever it exists, in the path of psychology. I will state the doctrine briefly, or I will rather state the manner in which I am forced to understand or perhaps to misunderstand it.

We have (according to this view) on one side the experienced, and that, if for the moment we disregard pleasure and pain, consists in the perceived, in objects given to and before the self. This forms the whole content of the experienced. The experienced in short is but one aspect of experience, and the other aspect consists in the activity of the self. This activity is itself not perceived and does not itself enter into the experienced content, and is not and cannot itself be made into an object. But beside these two sides of experience, one experienced and the other not experienced, we have also feeling in the sense of pleasure and pain. The position of this is to my mind so obscure that I cannot venture to state it. It is not an object, and cannot possibly be made into an object, it cannot be remembered, nor can we have an idea of it. Whether we are to say that it is not experienced I, however, do not know and must leave uncertain. Now this whole view, or any view which is like it, I venture to consider quite untenable and even absurd. Far from thinking the worse of genuine phenomenalism because it conflicts with such a view, I regard that conflict as a sign of truth and as a point in favour of phenomenalism.

The view (i) in the first place is in my judgement contrary to plain fact, and (ii) in the second place it refuses wholly in the end to work. (i) The position of our original awareness of pleasure and pain, for we somehow are aware of them, is to me so lost in obscurity that I can but point to it and pass on. But, when I am told that I cannot make

an object of a pleasure and cannot attend to it, I must reply by a flat contradiction. So far as the pleasure is felt merely, it is, I agree, so far not an object and does not come before the mind, and to urge that, in being made an object, it must to some extent be modified is at least a reasonable contention. But to insist that beside being felt it cannot also be made an object at all, seems in plain collision with fact.<sup>1</sup> And it is again in plain collision with fact to make the whole of what is at any moment experienced consist in objects before the mind. If you take a cross-section through that of which at any one moment we in the widest sense are aware—the whole way, I mean, in which we come to ourselves and feel ourselves at any given moment—you will hardly find that everything experienced there has the form of an object over against and given to the self. For the self feels itself, and it feels itself as something concrete, and it feels the presence of an object or objects given to this self which is so far not an object and yet is experienced. Against my objects I surely may feel myself to be passive or active, nor does this feeling consist in the mere presence of one or of two meaningless sensations. But how I can so feel myself if I am not aware of my self as something over against my objects, and how I can be so aware of my self if my self is itself not experienced, seems an insoluble puzzle. And to assert generally that in an emotion I experience nothing but objects together with pleasure and pain, and not my self otherwise at all, would seem even ridiculous. And in desire and conation the felt presence of a self, which is not experienced wholly as an object, seems really, when we reflect, to stare us in the face. Or rather it would do so if we had not blinded ourselves by a preconceived theory as to what is possible. And in short this whole view is a construction which for certain purposes may seem convenient, but which from first to last is really in sharp collision with the facts.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are some remarks on the question of ideas of pleasure and pain at the end of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> For some further remarks I may refer the reader to *M. N.S.* ii, No. 6 [*TR*, 192-8].

(ii) 'But what does that matter', I may hear it said, 'so long as the view works?' Yes, but, I reply, it does not work, but from the very first is in difficulties, and at a certain point it breaks down visibly and utterly. And, to omit the other difficulties, it breaks down finally in the following way:—The aspect of self has by this view been turned out of the experienced, and yet no one on the other hand can deny that self-consciousness is a fact. We rightly or wrongly, then, are in fact aware of a self, which self on the other hand cannot be experienced. But how in that case we can become aware of it, and by what process the idea or the notion, or whatever you prefer to call it, is ever to enter into our minds, seems impossible to discover or at least to exhibit intelligibly. And this is not a small matter and it is not a failure to explain some point of detail, but it seems on the contrary to be a cardinal and vital defect. Here is a fact—a very large and most important fact surely—which on a certain theory seems inexplicable, and which, so far as we see, would on that theory be impossible. And apart from other considerations, which here appear to be wanting, I submit that with so much any theory must be taken as disproved.<sup>1</sup>

I would venture to illustrate the above by a reference to a late work by Professor Andrew Seth. In his interesting volume, *Man's Place in the Cosmos*, Professor Seth takes up a position against phenomenalism in psychology, and I should like to point out that in that position he finds it impossible to maintain himself. The phenomenalism which he criticizes appears to involve the view that phenomena are all objects or perceptions. Now this view Professor Seth himself appears to endorse, and he does not seem to find it, so far as it goes, in the least mistaken. In fact I understand him to insist himself that all the content

<sup>1</sup> I was taught early that there was a most important test to be applied to every doctrine. Supposing a doctrine true, is the fact of its truth consistent with the fact that I know it to be true? This test I have always found, whether in metaphysics or in psychology, to be one which should never be neglected, and I do not hesitate to urge that in these studies its importance is really vital. On the other hand I readily admit that I am not competent to give any opinion as to what is to hold good within 'Epistemology'.



and matter of experience, all the experienced in short, does thus consist of objects, and that phenomenalism, not in the least mistaken so far, is mistaken only in ignoring other aspects of experience which are themselves not experienced. And 'feeling' I understand Professor Seth to identify here simply with pleasure and pain, and in respect of these to endorse wholly the position we have sketched above, and in the teeth of fact to deny that pleasure and pain can be made into objects or attended to or remembered. And, in short, so far and up to this point Professor Seth's position does not seem to me to call for any special remark,

But the second part of the article becomes to me very interesting and instructive. In this Professor Seth is concerned with the positive knowledge which we have of our own activity, and the conclusion at which he arrives seems to me to introduce a wholly different principle. Feeling becomes now for him no longer mere pleasure or pain, but it is the immediate awareness on the part of the self of its own being and activity. And this view of feeling, so far as I can judge, is in radical discrepancy with the first view, or at least would be so if its meaning and its bearings were developed. For this deliverance of feeling now surely cannot be denied to be matter which is experienced. You can surely no longer refuse to reply when you are asked as to the nature of its 'what'; and when inquiries are raised as to the variety of aspects within its content, you can hardly treat them as unmeaning. In short, the identification of content with the 'object' side of experience seems to have been tacitly given up, and with the abandonment of that prejudice the way has been cleared for quite another kind of doctrine. But I do not understand how Professor Seth himself fails to perceive that he has here two different views as to feeling, and that, if he accepts the second of these, he can no longer make use of the first.<sup>1</sup> And I will

<sup>1</sup> I do not know on what view of feeling Professor Seth stands in that portion of his instructive review of my book in which he touches on the subject (pp. 168, 213). I should like to say once more here that the essence of the view which I adopt—whether that is right or wrong—is that feeling does give us a positive manifold content.

venture to add that, if Professor Seth would throw the first view over wholly and entirely with all the false prejudices which belong to it, and then without any *arrière pensée* would commit himself to and would develop the second view, he would produce a work which, whether they agreed with it or not, would be of the highest interest and advantage to students of philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

It is only for a false view, then, that phenomena consist merely of objects. The experienced contains in itself very much more than these. And it is the whole content of the experienced which, when regarded in a certain way, becomes a coexistence and succession of events and forms the subject-matter of empirical psychology.

I should like to append to this paper some remarks on a point which I have noticed already, the question, that is, as to whether there are ideas of pleasure and pain. And, since a separate question may be raised about pain, it is better for us here to confine our attention to pleasure. My object in what follows is not to attempt in passing the full discussion of a large subject, but to mention some difficulties which, so far as I have observed, have not been properly recognized. I shall say no more here on the strange paradox that I cannot attend to a pleasure; and the general doctrine that Association holds only between 'objects' I of course do not accept. I follow here the more

<sup>1</sup> 'With the elimination of real causality from the course of things', Professor Seth remarks, 'the world is emptied of real meaning' (p. 125). But, without raising here any discussion as to the sense in which causality is to be taken, I should like to emphasize a question which Professor Seth, it seems to me, too much ignores. If you eliminate something, as he seems only too ready to do, from the *experienced* world, have you not in fact banished it from the world altogether? Is there in short any other world in which it could exist?

Since the above was written I have had the advantage of consulting Dr. Mellone's *Philosophical Criticism*, but I cannot see that his position is really in advance of that taken by Professor Seth. It appears to me that what is true and what is false are still left standing side by side. But why the true view is not from the first laid down and without scruple worked out, while the false view is thrown aside, I am quite unable to understand. But Dr. Mellone, I trust, will do this some day.

established view, and judge that there is reason to think that Association holds everywhere. I think also that, if any one maintains the separation in a concrete product of the aspect of pleasure from the aspect of sensation, and asserts the activity of one side only—the burden of proof should rest upon him. But, without entering here on these points, I wish very briefly to call attention to some difficulties which result from the view that we have no ideas of pleasure.

This view considers that we have ideas only of that which was pleasant, but that its pleasantness is in no sense recalled in idea. The mutilated residue which actually is recalled may create a fresh reaction of pleasure or not, according to the conditions now present. And as the residue provokes or does not provoke this reaction, it becomes or does not become what we commonly call an idea of pleasure.<sup>1</sup> This view seems a paradox and I think that it is certainly a mistake, the result of a previous error in principle, but on the other hand I do not see how its falsity could be actually demonstrated.<sup>2</sup> It has, however, in its working to encounter, it seems to me, the following difficulties.

(1) The memory and thought of a past pleasure may in fact now on the whole be pleasant or be indifferent or be painful, while it yet may remain in each case the actual and positive idea of a past pleasure.<sup>3</sup> If indeed we con-

<sup>1</sup> I may perhaps be allowed to mention that the reader will find this view stated in my *Principles of Logic*, 442-4 = 408-10.

<sup>2</sup> I do not think that it is 'almost impossible' to produce a conclusive instance of 'purely affective memory' (Ribot, *Psychologie des Sentiments*, p. 170). It seems to me that from the nature of the case such a thing could not exist. The required abstraction cannot be made, and hence any proof or disproof of this kind seems out of the question. The issue must be decided in one way or the other according as one view or the other is found in the end to strain the facts more or less, when all the facts are considered.

<sup>3</sup> I am forced to dissent from much in the following passage from Dr. Stout with regard to association in the case of pleasure and pain. 'In order to see that the law of contiguity does not apply to pleasure-pain as it applies to presentations, we have only to recall some very common experiences. The sight of food awakens pleasure before eating; but after we have eaten to satiety it gives rise only to indifference or disgust. This is

sider what the idea on the whole *is* now with regard to pleasure and pain, and distinguish this existence from what the idea means, we must, I quite agree, call the idea a new creation. But we must also add that this new creation does not necessarily, as we have seen, qualify the meaning of the idea, for that meaning in each case, we have seen, remains an idea of past pleasure. Now this ordinary instance raises, I submit, serious if not fatal difficulties.

inexplicable by the law of contiguity. If the pleasure of eating became associated with the sight of food by repetition, it ought easily to be revived whenever we concentrate attention on a well-furnished dinner-table. The pleasure depends on the satisfaction of an appetite, and when the appetite has disappeared it disappears also, and cannot be revived by mere association' (*Analytic Psychology*, i. 271-2). On this I would remark first that the facts are not quite as Dr. Stout has described them, and in particular I would call attention to one point among others which he has here ignored. In the clear absence of appetite or in the clear presence also even of disgust, I still may remember that I *was* pleased. And an apparent fact of this kind is surely something to be reckoned with. And in the second place Dr. Stout's remarks seem to rest on the assumption that, wherever there is an association of which one member is present, the associated element must under all conditions come up, and perhaps even come up easily. But does Dr. Stout himself really accept this principle? His argument, if I understand it rightly, would prove of the ideas say of mastication and deglutition, or say again the idea of vomiting, that, unless these *always* are aroused by the sight of some food, they cannot be associated with it at all, but in every possible case, where they arise, are fresh and further resultants. But is not, I would ask, such a principle false, and does not the application of it bring us into collision with fact?

Dr. Stout's general view as to pleasure and pain is, I think, on the whole stated admirably, and it is perhaps in consequence of this that he is driven at times into a fatal *impasse*, and, as it seems to me, tries to extricate himself by arguments that will not bear examination. In illustration of what I must be allowed to call the paradox that all pleasure involves conation, he adduces the fact that if a cat is resting comfortably, it resists interference (ii. 304-5). But this seems precisely the old fallacy about pleasure and activity which I once before tried to refute (*E.* xiv. 264) in the form in which it was offered by Dr. Bain. You surely cannot, because under altered conditions a thing becomes this or that, treat it as actually being so now and without those conditions, except of course by a licence. And it is, I would venture to add, one thing to postulate, on what rightly or wrongly seems sufficient evidence, the existence of conation everywhere where we find pleasure, and quite another thing to undertake actually to verify the presence of this conation everywhere in fact. But on this point I may probably have failed to interpret Dr. Stout rightly.

One way of meeting these would be, I suppose, to argue that the present reaction has stages and at all events is mixed, and that the various stages, or generally the various ingredients of this general mixture, somehow distribute and arrange themselves rightly without the operation of association, and thus not only belong, but are recognized as belonging, to their several excitants. I cannot think that such an account would prove satisfactory, and it seems to lead to complications, and to call for elucidation which I could not supply. But another way of explanation would of course consist in the denial of the fact to be explained. One might assert that there is not in fact any such thing as a pleasant idea of past unpleasantness or an unpleasant idea of past pleasure, and that it is only by an illusion that we think that we possess these things. But for myself I am unable to see how such a position could be maintained. And hence the above difficulty appears to myself to call for very serious consideration.<sup>1</sup>

(2) The next question I should like to raise is a difficulty about the requisite lapse of time. In ideas of the

<sup>1</sup> There is a difficulty here, I admit, which attaches itself also to the view which I think the true one. In order to have an idea of pleasure I consider that we must *to some extent* have an actual pleasure, for I accept it as a principle that to some extent an idea must be what it means. But on the view which I adopt we have here an associative bond to unite specially the two elements, in addition to whatever original union there may be apart from that bond. And I consider this to be a very great advantage on my side.

An interesting but very difficult question arises here as to our perception of the different strengths of pleasure and pain. We indubitably in fact do perceive these degrees, and we at least seem to have ideas of them. In fact I should say that we can without doubt actually have a strong idea of a weak pleasure or a weak idea of a strong pleasure. A question, however, must be raised as to whether we can perceive different strengths of pleasure *as such*. It is necessary, I think, to say that we can even do this. I do not of course mean that we can have a 'more' of pleasure without a 'more' of what is pleasant, but that we can, beside a 'more' of what is pleasant, actually have a moreness of and in pleasure. If we follow the facts we must, I think, suppose a scale of degrees in pleasure as such, a scale which can be attended to and made into an idea. On this ground again the paradox that we cannot attend to or have an idea of pleasure would seem not easy to maintain.

pleasant the pleasantness at least *seems* to be an integral part of the meaning; and, if it is not so, and has to be on every occasion freshly made, is there always enough of time, when we think rapidly, for this new creation to supervene in each case? Or if there is not time enough, are we to be said here to think only in words and without a genuine meaning? To one who like myself considers pleasure to be an essential element in beauty it seems hard to suppose that, when we use aesthetic ideas, this element of their meaning is in each case a fresh effect of the other elements. But even apart from this special instance of aesthetic ideas, how is the general difficulty about this lapse of time to be dealt with?

In asserting the law of Association to hold of pleasure we must of course remember that, unless there are distinctions in pleasure of such a kind and to such an extent as most certainly seem wanting, the connexion cannot be taken to hold from the mere aspect of pleasantness to this or that pleasant thing in distinction from other things. The bond will hold from the side of pleasure but generically. On the other side, however, from the thing to the pleasure, the special association will hold. But such a one-sided arrangement does not seem to me to be really exceptional or to create any real difficulty.

These points which I have mentioned may perhaps have been discussed satisfactorily and may very well, I admit, have been so discussed without my knowing it. But if this is not so, I venture to think that we have difficulties here of which some serious account should be taken.

## XXIII

### SOME REMARKS ON CONATION

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IN the following paper I intend to remark on certain aspects of conation. I hope to supplement it with others which will discuss some further questions about volition and desire. But I cannot even in the end attempt to treat these subjects completely, and in these pages especially my object is very limited. I find myself with a view more or less definite about desire and conation, a view which in the main I accepted long ago, and which I have seen no good reason to abandon. I find on the other hand certain doctrines taught by some writers whom I sincerely respect, doctrines which at least appear to be incompatible with that view which I have adopted. And I am confident that none of us has ideas so absurd that, when understood, they should have no truth. Hence I am going to set down about conation some things which to myself appear to be true, in the hope that some one will explain how and why to him they are not true, or how being true there is perhaps no one who in the end holds views in collision with them.

The main contention of this paper is that conation is something which we experience, that it is complex and has in itself some inseparable aspects which therefore are experienced, that apart from these experienced aspects conation has lost its true meaning, and that the use of it in another meaning, if not illegitimate, is in psychology at least dangerous. Certainly I do not deny that there is experience below the level of conation proper. And I do not deny that this experience has features which survive at a higher level, though in part more or less transformed there, and that these features go to constitute that which we call conation. An inquiry into the nature and limits of such a lower experience would in its own place be

important and even necessary, but it falls beyond the narrow scope of this article. We are to ask here about the minimum which can be taken to be contained in conation proper. How much of that minimum can exist, and under what precise form it exists, where conation is not reached, is a question which cannot be considered here. On the one hand, to repeat, I should agree that below conation there are certain aspects or elements which we also find in conation proper. On the other hand I must not be taken to admit that any one of the aspects of conation exists outside of it exactly as it exists within it. And I fear that with due regard for the limited purpose of this paper I could make no attempt to be more explicit.

Confining ourselves then to conation where it exists at its proper level, we discover there in every case some inseparable characters. These essential features are the aspect of a 'not-myself' and of a 'myself' hindered by this, together with an idea of a change containing the removal of the hindrance, an idea with which the 'myself' feels itself one. And all these aspects must be experienced at once if conation is to exist. The appeal is of course made to the experience of the reader, and it would, I think, be useless to attempt a long exposition.

The first question is whether we can experience conation at all. I am not concerned here to define conation accurately and to ask whether, for example, we could properly apply the term to all desire. But taking conation here as a general head under which fall desire, striving, and impulse, our question would seem to admit of but one answer. When I strive or desire I certainly can feel and be aware more or less distinctly that I am striving or desiring. This seems plain, and no one, I believe, could deny it except perhaps in the interest of some theory, nor indeed do I see how to make it plainer. Whether we may ever use conation as the name of some state of which I am not at all aware as conation, is of course another point to which I shall return. But for the present I shall assume that conation can be experienced as such, and it is about this conation of which we are aware that I am at present



to speak. When we experience this, what is it that we feel and experience?

When I am conscious of striving, there is an existence, a 'not-myself', to be altered, and I find that I am aware of this existence. The point is to me so clear that I cannot try to make it clearer. But the objection may come that what I strive to change may at times be my own self, and therefore that this existence cannot properly be called a not-self. I however reply that whatever is felt as an existence opposed to the self is for this purpose a not-self, and that in conation such an opposition is always experienced. And, as I shall come back to this point, I will at present deal with it no further. But in conation I am not only aware of a not-self, but I am aware of it also as something to be changed. In conation I therefore must possess and use an idea of the change. I have in other words an end, however vague, and I have it also in my knowledge; and if so, I must have an idea of a 'to be', and without this idea there is no conation. This second point once again seems to me almost too clear for exposition, but it is necessary here to guard against two fatal misunderstandings.

(i) It will be objected first that we may have conation, and may even experience conation, without any idea of an end. There are impulses (it will be said) instinctive and acquired which are indeed directed on an object and directed to an end, and yet in these no idea of the end need be present to the mind. And there are again the facts of felt need and dim desire where want and impulse are experienced, but where we certainly do not know the goal in which we seek satisfaction. Now (it will be urged) there may fairly be a difference of opinion here as to what and how much we in each case experience, but in some of these cases at least it is clear that we have no idea of an end, and on the other hand it is equally clear that conation is present. And the existence of blind conation, it will thus be said, cannot possibly be denied. But in answer to this objection I must insist that if there is a conation it is not wholly blind, and that where we have real blindness we have something which is not really a conation.

In some of these alleged blind states there in fact is certainly a vague and ill-defined idea, a point which I shall soon attempt to explain, while in others on the other hand I agree that no idea of an end is present in fact. In the feeling of want, for example, I may be aware of pain and uneasiness and of restless movement, and yet in some cases at least there may be no idea of what would satisfy, and therefore, I should add, certainly no conation at all and no appetite proper. And of course in some 'impulses' I should agree that the subject is impelled to be active, and that the activity is directed to a certain end, and I should agree also that while active he may have no idea at all of this end. But then I should deny that such 'impulses' are cases of conation, for I should insist that in these no conation is experienced. Something is experienced there, I should say, which also enters into and is experienced in conation proper.<sup>1</sup> What are present there are certain aspects of conation proper, and these aspects, given another element, really are transformed into and become an actual conation, and they normally in fact are developed into it. And so *you*, standing outside, transfer covertly this wanting element from your own experience to the mind of the other subject. Hence through confusion you call the fact by a name which belongs to the complete state, a state which in fact and actually is not being experienced by this subject at all. Or else, perhaps, you knowingly for the sake of convenience apply the term in a mutilated sense. In either case I consider your procedure indefensible, and the issue, it seems to me, may be raised in the following way. Take an instance of conation where the idea of a 'to be' is present, then take another state of mind without any such idea or, to avoid objection, let us say another state of mind so far as it is without the idea.<sup>2</sup> Be sure that

<sup>1</sup> I would once more here remind the reader that I cannot in this article attempt to explain how much of conation in the proper sense can exist outside conation. My object here is merely to insist on certain features without which there is really no conation.

<sup>2</sup> I am not attempting in this article to show where conation is and is not experienced as such. I will only say here that there are assertions about

the idea has been removed wholly and utterly and is not covertly supplied. Then see whether, in passing from one of these experiences to the other, you do not feel an essential difference between them. If you do not find this difference I confess that I cannot proceed, though I am unable to believe that you have properly performed the operation. But, if you find it, I urge that this difference is essential to conation, and that where it is wanting conation is not present. For the conation of which I am now speaking is, I would remind the reader, experienced conation. And if you reply that this essential difference is not essential to conation, I ask for the name of that state to which really it is essential. So far as I see you give no name to what I call conation, a state which, as we have now recognized, essentially differs from what you call by that name. We will not argue about names, and I will leave you to find that which you think suitable. And then I should repeat, conation involves the idea of an end, and without this there is no conation at all in the sense of experienced conation. And whatever name you substitute for conation my contention will remain unaffected. It will be simply a question of writing one word for the other and of employing probably a bad name instead of a good one. Only I must insist that you do not pass tacitly in future, wherever it pleases you, from one meaning to the other.

(ii) 'But', it may be said, 'there remains a difficulty about the *idea*. If we admit that conation cannot be experienced without an awareness of something "to be", yet in many cases where really this genuine feeling exists you cannot show an idea. We may for instance have a perceived thing and a desire for that thing, and may yet have no image at all.' This objection, however, would rest on a common prejudice about the nature of ideas.<sup>1</sup> It is

the omnipresence of this experience which I am quite unable to reconcile with fact. Cp. *E.* xiv. 260.

<sup>1</sup> I am here taking no account of those who, while more or less assenting to the substance of what is urged in the text, would nevertheless wish to confine the use of the word 'idea'. This is a difference merely with regard

believed that, in order to have something ideal which qualifies an object, we must have an image or images existing separate or at least separable from that object. I say nothing here about the further possible question as to the alleged necessity for words, except to dismiss it as here certainly not worth discussing. But this identification of the ideal with images is surely a mistake. If, to have ideas, we had to wait till we possessed such images, assuredly, I should say, we never should get any ideas or could ever begin to think at all. And this is a point to be insisted on everywhere and generally, and not specially with regard to desire and conation. The first form of the ideal is a sensible existence modified in its content so as to be incompatible with itself as merely perceived. In intellectual perception a suggested modification of this kind is usually accepted by the perceived object, and the object is thus altered accordingly and so ceases in its old form to exist. There is hence no awareness here of anything ideal at all. But under other circumstances, and always we may say in desire,<sup>1</sup> the case is altered. The perceived existence there is qualified in a way incompatible with itself, and yet it cannot simply accept this new qualification and so cease to exist as at first perceived. On the contrary it persists as before, and yet is modified also in an incompatible manner. And in the awareness of this qualification of the perceived fact, a qualification discordant with the perceived fact, we gain our first experience of the nature of an idea. An obvious instance is a perceived fruit which I cannot reach, while yet I feel it, as we say, in my hands or in my mouth. The fruit itself is qualified here at once actually and ideally. The ideal qualification does not or need not consist in separated images, and yet it is an idea and is the end which is desired by me. If I may be allowed

to terminology. It seems to me all-important to extend the application of the term 'idea' and to keep any restricted use under the general head. I am, however, far from denying the value of distinction here.

<sup>1</sup> If our wants could be satisfied at once as they arose, should we know what appetite means? I do not discuss this question, but I think it turns on what we mean by 'at once'.

to quote a passage from a former article, we have here a 'state where the presented is qualified ideally so as to collide with itself, and where this discrepant content is desired without being a separate image. A common instance of this would be desire for (the continuance of) a feeling which exists. And it was when sensation had been overpowered by its idealized self, that desire, as we saw, almost ceased before the moment of possession. This again is how we can have a desire without knowledge, a dim desire with no clear object, as in the usual example of the sexual impulse. It is not that we have *no* idea, for, if so, our state would be something lower than desire. But the idea is a common element, a something in a number of psychical states, which pleases and is not in harmony with these states as they are, and its increase is felt to lead us beyond, we know not where. We desire the presented, but we desire it with an ideal qualification. We need have no image, and yet even here we want to realize an idea.'<sup>1</sup>

It is by this principle that we can distinguish between appetite and the mere feeling of need or want. In the last phrase I must be permitted once more to remark on the fatal ambiguity of the word 'of'.<sup>2</sup> If the need or want is felt as such, we certainly possess an idea, however vague and general, of that which we want, an idea which, we have seen, need not be separated from the object as perceived. With such an idea we have, normally, also appetite. But without that idea we have but more or less localized feelings of discomfort and restlessness, and these sensations are not feelings *of* want except for a further knowledge and recognition existing in an outside mind or coming to our own by later reflection.

<sup>1</sup> *M.o.s.* xiii. 23 [*E.* xiv. 269]. I would refer the reader further to the context of this passage, and again to my *Appearance*, 547 = 606. It is possible to object to the presence everywhere of an idea in conation and will on the ground that, if this were so, we could not will to have an idea without already possessing it. But the objection is met by insisting in these cases on the genuine presence of an idea of the idea. I have referred to this point on p. 270 of the above article, and had previously discussed it, *M.o.s.* xi. 313 and 319 [*E.* x. 190 and 197].

<sup>2</sup> *Cp. E.* x. 197.

We have seen that in conation we experience a not-myself together with an idea of its alteration, and I will now proceed to point out a further aspect of our experience. In conation and desire I feel that *I* am desiring and striving, that I am being hindered by the not-myself, that I am something and yet that I am not what I would be. In brief, in conation the self is experienced as itself qualified by the idea of the altered object. It is thus felt to be in collision with the object as not-altered, and without this experienced aspect there is once more no conation at all. The appeal is again to the observation of the reader, and nothing, I think, would be gained by a lengthy attempt at exposition. I will, however, try to remove some misunderstandings.

How, it may be asked, can this hindered self be experienced unless it is experienced as something concrete, and how can it be anything concrete when, as we saw, the self can even oppose itself in desire to its self? Where the self is experienced as a concrete hindrance, how can we also there have a concrete experience of the self as hindered? But the self, I reply, never can make an object of its whole self at once. It can at any one time so attend only to certain elements of its content. These are distinguished from it and so being distinguished make a not-self, but the whole of feeling from which they are distinguished remains and still is felt. This whole is concrete, and only because this concrete substance is actually experienced is it possible ever to experience a self or a not-self at all. I at least do not know what is meant by the experience of an object or a not-self, unless the self is also at the same time experienced inseparably with it.<sup>1</sup> And I do not know what is meant by such an experience of the self, unless that self is something concrete and is so actually experienced. The same remark applies to our state when we merely perceive an object as given to us. Unless the 'us', the self, is here experienced as a concrete content, I cannot myself imagine

<sup>1</sup> I do not mean that the self must be experienced at the same level, that, e.g., as against a perception the self must be perceived. This would be a very serious error.

how we are to go about to feel it as passive. And with regard to conation and desire the case seems to stand as follows. We have before us a not-self which is an object, and we have before us an idea of a 'to be' which again is an object. We experience further our self in collision with the not-self, but that self, though experienced, is (so far as the conation goes) not before us and it is not an object, except so far as, and to that extent up to which, it enters into the content of the idea of the 'to be'.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, our self must be felt as a whole and felt also as one with the idea of the 'to be'. And if the self is not so felt, there is at once an end of what we experience as conation. And I would appeal on this point to the judgement of the reader who has no theory to save.

'But', it may be further objected, 'my self is something which goes beyond the moment. It is the unity of my life, and how can this be felt as the mere content of one experience? It is more than one single experience and therefore it cannot really be felt within one.' But it seems possible, I reply, so to feel it when a man stakes here and now his entire being on the accomplishment of some end. And the whole objection seems in fact to rest on a misunderstanding. Certainly it is desirable to ask about the real nature of that self which goes beyond the moment, and to inquire how far and in what sense it is identical, and is felt to be identical, with that which at one time is experienced. But this task, necessary in its own place, is here not necessary, and, however important these questions are, I may pass them by. For my contention was that in conation the self in fact is experienced against a not-self, and by urging that the self is more than this experience and goes beyond it, you obviously do not disprove that contention. You do not disprove it unless you are prepared

<sup>1</sup> Usually and, perhaps it might be contended, even normally, the self to some extent does thus enter in. I have an idea of myself for instance as already touching or eating the fruit which I desire. The more prevalent doctrine, I believe, is that in desire this *must* always be the case. I am not, however, able to accept this view as correct (see *E.* xiv. 267). I hope in a future article on volition to return to this matter.

to insist that, because the self is more, it must therefore be less and in fact does not enter into my experience at all. On a doctrine of this kind I shall lower down have something to say, but at present I will meet it by an appeal to fact. I find my self in fact so experienced, and if upon any theory that cannot happen, so much the worse for the theory.

'But', I may further be asked, 'may we not have an outbreak from some tendency in the subject or self, and may not this outbreak produce a characteristic experience? May it not be directed to a certain end, and yet, as experienced, not contain the element of a hindered self?' Yes, I should reply, in the main I agree that this contention is sound. But, on the other hand, I must urge that it is irrelevant and a mere return to the confusion which I have already pointed out. Such an experience is not a conation for the self which feels it. It is not experienced as a conation, and therefore it is not properly a conation at all. For, I would repeat, it is conation as experienced which at present is in question.

We have seen that in conation or desire we have the aspects of not-self and self and an idea of a 'to be'. I wish now to insist that all these aspects must be experienced together and must be felt as one whole, and that, failing this, the experience of conation is destroyed. I have not to ask here if any felt state can precede and can be experienced without any consciousness of a not-self or self, nor have I to ask whether the practical attitude is prior to the theoretical attitude, if indeed either is prior. Such questions, however important, may here be disregarded. I am urging that as soon as conation is experienced, whenever that is, it must contain certain features and must also be felt as one whole. Now 'feeling' I use for experience, or if you will for knowledge, so far as that experience or knowledge does not imply an object, and I should myself give as a very obvious instance a simple pain or pleasure, or again those elements of our Cœnaesthesia to which we do not attend. I am myself averse to the use of the term



'knowledge'<sup>1</sup> here, because that term naturally tends to imply that there is an object before me and a distinction experienced between the knower and the known. But within feeling there is no such distinction between the experience and the experienced or between the known and the knowing. If it is knowledge, it is that form of knowledge which does not contain a not-self as opposed to the self.

But everything that in any sense whatever we know or experience must, so far as it enters into our experience, be felt as ours. The most abstract thought, for instance, of the most remote thing must also and as well, while I have it, be an element in my felt self. The thing is not a *mere* feeling of course, and, so far as you regard its content as referred to a subject (so far, that is, as it is thought of and is taken as a thing), it is so far not a feeling at all. For you have got it now as abstracted from that immediate whole into which, taken otherwise, it enters, and enters as a mere feature. And an experience or knowledge of any kind which is not thus felt as now and mine, is in my opinion a mere illusion. Everything, we may put it so,

<sup>1</sup> A difficulty is caused here by the ambiguity of the term 'knowledge'. This is used on the one hand as equivalent to 'experience' or at least to 'familiarity' in the widest sense of these terms, and on the other hand it is restricted to a theoretic state and to what may be called the cognition of an object. I cannot of course ask here in what cognition consists, and whether beside an object it does not also involve an idea and judgement. But, passing this by, we may say that knowledge is used either in a very broad sense for experience or in a narrower sense as limited to knowledge *of* or *about* an object. And hence on the one hand it sounds absurd to say that we do not know pleasure and pain or conation, and it sounds absurd again to speak of these states as being states of knowledge. The fact is that we naturally pass from the state in which we merely, for instance, feel a pleasure or pain to the state in which we feel it and also make it an object. The view that we cannot make an object of a pleasure or pain, I may remark in passing, is to my mind quite indefensible. Hence, because I can and do make these things into objects (as indeed I am able to do in the end with everything), and because there is a natural tendency to confuse our state when we do this with our state when we merely feel, it sounds absurd to deny knowledge in the case of an experience of pleasure or pain. But when we speak strictly I think it is better to deny, and, when we realize what we mean, the absurdity disappears.

that in any way whatever comes within our experience, is a feeling, though in our experience there are some things which also and at the same time in certain aspects are more than felt, and, if taken merely so, are not felt. Thus in conation the not-self which is an object is also felt as an element of my whole state, and the idea of the 'to be', which is an object, is once more felt as another element there. And the self, to which the not-self is opposed and which finds itself at one with the idea, is both felt as mine in the same sense in which the object is mine, and it is felt as mine again in a further and a higher sense.<sup>1</sup> These several aspects are all felt, and they are each not felt as separate but together in connexion with one another as

<sup>1</sup> I do not discuss this last point here. It will be taken up in other articles. It is a matter which in one sense I agree is inexplicable, but at the same time I may hope to convey to the reader my meaning with regard to it. This may be done, perhaps, briefly in the following way. We find in conation both the theoretical and the practical relation of self to an object. And for the purpose of this article we may take these relations as existing and as really inseparable, and we need raise no question either as to any priority between them or as to anything that may have preceded one or both. But while taking them here as really inseparable, let us by an abstraction separate and consider first the theoretical relation by itself. In this experience there is an object for me, let us say a fruit. This object is in the first place (*a*) felt as mine, as an element, that is, in my whole felt state, and it is also in the second place (*b*) felt as something other than myself. And my self, so far, it will be understood, is not an object at all. Let us now, however, add and restore to our abstraction the practical relation and let us note the difference. There will be here also an idea, let us say of eating the fruit. This idea is itself an object beside and against the first object, or more correctly, perhaps, we may be said to have a new complex object containing both. Now the idea, being an object, is like the first object felt (*a*) as an element in my whole state, and (*b*) again, like the first object, it is felt as a something not myself. But the idea is also (*c*) as against the first object felt as mine and one with me. My self feels that this idea (which, so far as it is an object, is an other) is in its opposition to the first object not an other to myself. On the contrary, the idea is felt as the expression of my self against the first object, which is now in two senses something alien to me. If the reader will consider this brief statement with attention, he will I hope realize the meaning of that special sense in which in conation the idea is felt as one with myself. I will add that even in the practical relation I do not myself consider that the self necessarily enters into the content of the idea and so becomes an object to itself. This is, however, a point to be discussed in a future article.

integral features in one whole. This whole is 'known' and is experienced, though as a whole it is not an object. We may of course go on to make it an object, but, so far as we do this, we have induced a new state of mind. We have got now a new felt whole with an added element, but we have still a whole in which everything on the one hand is felt as mine, and where on the other hand the feeling of my self is not and cannot be an object.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that conation is experienced and has a complex content, and we have noticed the elements of that complex. We have further seen that conation must be felt as one, as a single whole with certain aspects, all of which must be experienced if conation proper is to exist. And I would recommend this result not as a theory but as a fact to be observed by the reader, and I am even confident that, if the reader will observe disinterestedly the thing for himself, he will find it to be very much as I have described it. He may consider that what I have set down has been more or less mal-observed and misinterpreted, but I think that in the main perhaps he will agree about the facts, if, that is, he does not come to the work with a theory to save. And since the result which I have stated is on the whole not mine and is far from being novel, it seems to me strange that some psychologists should treat this result, altogether or in part, as being something unknown or non-existent. And yet the outcome of a failure to notice such an apparent fact as we have described, and the outcome of a further insistence perhaps, on the part of some, that the self itself is not experienced at all, and itself does not enter as an element into the content of the known—seems not satisfactory. Any such doctrine seems not only in itself contrary to fact, but in its working also it appears to break down. For in the end no one, even to save a theory, can

<sup>1</sup> So far as the conation remains a conation, it still must be felt as such. So far as it is made a mere object it is not a conation, and the making it an object may under some conditions destroy it. To make an object of a conation may even be said, if this is taken in the abstract, to tend to destroy it. But, the conditions being complex, the result will of course always vary with them, and the general effect may be to intensify the conation. I cannot, however, discuss this subject here.

deny the fact of self-consciousness. Somehow the self as a reality or as an appearance is known, and in the end somehow the self, whether truly or falsely, does get into our experience and knowledge. But how, if it does not itself enter into the experienced, the self could ever be known, or ever in any way could be thought of or imagined, remains an insoluble problem. We have here a question that may be asked or may be ignored, but will never, I think, be answered intelligibly.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that conation, if experienced, must possess certain aspects, and that apart from these it is not experienced conation. And taking this as shown, I will go on to deal shortly with a further point. Why, it may be asked, even if conation is not in fact experienced except as you contend, should we not for some purposes employ the term when taken otherwise? Now if this question is asked with respect to metaphysics I wish to say nothing here. And if the question were asked with regard to some branch of natural science I should not venture to say anything, because all that I could say would be that whatever ideas, however fictitious, best work there I believe to be best and right. But if the same question is raised about psychology I may answer briefly as follows. If you take a term like conation which stands for an experienced fact, and apply it to something else which is not so experienced, you clearly so far are making use of a fiction.<sup>2</sup> And about this fiction we must ask a twofold question which is vital. Is it in itself a good way in which to explain some psychical facts, and does it when so used entail mischievous consequences? Now I would not deny that this fiction can

<sup>1</sup> In much of the above I am once more urging what I had to urge long ago in my *Ethical Studies*. I have always, I hope, been at bottom faithful to that cardinal truth which I was so fortunate as to learn early—the truth that what matters is the self that is experienced, and that there is nothing else whatever which matters. Between a self outside the experienced and no self at all there is in the end really no difference.

<sup>2</sup> I am not objecting to the general employment of fictions in psychology. On the contrary I think them necessary, and justifiable so far as they are useful and not injurious.

serve as a legitimate way of explanation, though when it is taken on the whole I venture to think that it does not work successfully. But on the other hand its use seems open incidentally to a very serious objection. For psychology surely has to observe and to study psychical facts, and among these facts, we have now agreed, is conation in its genuine form as something experienced. If therefore in psychology you will insist on employing conation in another form also, you will have two meanings of conation which you will be bound throughout and everywhere to keep in mind and to distinguish. Your working fiction must not be allowed to distract you from the attentive study of the genuine fact; and the full nature of the genuine fact, when you apply your fiction, must be kept resolutely out of view. This has to be done within one and the same study, and any failure is liable to make mischief. Now if you can yourself perform this feat, you must be different I think from the majority of psychologists,<sup>1</sup> and further, if you did yourself perform this feat, it is almost certain that your readers would not follow you. If then we admit that the feat, if actually performed, may in some ways be useful, on the other hand the attempt to perform it on the part of your readers and yourself would probably result

<sup>1</sup> I find it hard to believe that a writer clear as Dr. Stout usually is distinguishes always between an experienced conation and what he would call a 'quasi-conative tendency'. I venture to think that he is himself at times thus led into ambiguity. We may agree to his statement (*Manual*, II. viii, §§ 5, 6) that 'a pleasing process is a process which tends to maintain itself'. But when we hear that 'it will not be denied that there is at least an unconscious tendency to continue a pleasing experience until we have had enough of it', we may be forced to protest. It is far from certain that these two propositions are the same. I should myself agree to the first, though as to its meaning there is much to be said (*E.* xiv). But I must deny the second until at least I have been told what it does and does not involve. I cannot admit the assertion that pleasure is *always* the result of a satisfied conation, or even that it *always* implies a conation—if, that is, conation stands for what we experience as such, or even for an unconscious striving of our whole nature. But if on the other hand the unconscious conation is that of a mere element in our selves, Dr. Stout's language concerning it would hardly be defensible. If in short conation is used for an unconscious tendency, I think ambiguity will most probably follow.

in more or less of confusion. And in this confusion the genuine fact to be observed would tend to become lost to view. But in any case I would end this paper with the appeal which it has been its main purpose to urge. Let us at least begin with an attempt to observe in its entirety the experienced fact of conation. Let us endeavour to find out what it contains, and, if that is complex, let us seek to analyse it and to set out its aspects; and, if in the fact there is nothing complex, let us try at least to point to the fact and to distinguish it more or less intelligibly from other facts or elements or aspects of fact. And if what I have contended for here with regard to conation is really incorrect or superfluous, still I must think that it would be better if its incorrectness or its superfluity were shown, and that from that exhibition there would at least result some gain in clearness.

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It may naturally be asked whether the objection, which I have raised to the use of 'conation' in any sense other than that of experienced conation, applies equally in the case of a term like 'activity'. Is this term to be confined in psychology to the activity which is apprehended? I have long ago stated that in my opinion it need not be so confined.<sup>1</sup> We commonly speak of the activity of a volcano or of a drug, and may even talk of an effort or a struggle on the part of some material object, just as again we also may speak of its passivity. I am very far from condemning

<sup>1</sup> See *E.* xii. 225-7, and *E.* xiv. 281-3. I have also more recently touched on this distinction in *A.R.* 545=604. I was led to speak there of 'the question, What is the content of activity as it appears to the soul at first, *in distinction from it as it is for an outside observer*, or for the soul later on?' I observe that in making an extract from this passage for a controversial purpose Professor Ward (*Naturalism*, ii, p. 244) has made his extract end before and short of the words I have now italicized, and has thus himself actually caused the passage to ignore a distinction which it really contains. Professor Ward, I must presume, was not aware of the meaning attached to the above words, and indeed his misapprehension with regard to my meaning may be described as general. With regard to this extract the reader may perhaps agree with me that the result, if unfortunate, is instructive.

this language even when applied to a material object, and it would surely be absurd if I condemned it when applied to what is higher. We are right, I think, in using these terms either of the soul or again of the self as a whole, or again of any element in the self or soul. A fixed idea would of course be an instance where we might be almost compelled to apply such terms to an element or a group of elements. On the other hand we must distinguish such activity, which is, we may say, only in itself, or in other words only for an outsider, from the activity which is also for that which is active—the activity which is experienced (*a*) properly in the sense of being apprehended as activity, or (*b*) improperly in the sense of being attended by some feeling which is not itself an apprehension of activity. Whether, however, in the last case we can properly say that the activity is for the mind must certainly (to say the very least) be questioned.

If we observe the above distinctions, and if we do not try to transcend the region of psychical events and their laws (cp. *E.* xxii), I think we may safely use the term activity within psychology. On the other hand I do not see how psychology can rightly ignore the question of the origin and nature of our apprehension of ourselves as active and of course also as passive.<sup>1</sup>

The term 'conation' is however, I think, in a different position. Its application to the state of a thing which is not aware of any striving, though not new, is, I presume, not established in psychology. And 'conation' does to my mind suggest naturally an actual awareness of the fact of striving. If, however, we cannot abstain from a different use, we should at least attempt in some way to guard ourselves throughout from ambiguity and confusion. We should, I submit, have some way of distinguishing clearly a conation which is not experienced at all, or not experi-

<sup>1</sup> A question naturally may be raised as to the minimum which is involved in such an apprehension, and as to whether we can be aware of activity and of passivity in a lower sense, a sense which does not involve agency proper. I have discussed this question at some length in a later article of the present series.

enced as a conation, from a conation which is really experienced in that character. To confuse these three distinct meanings must surely upon any view be inadmissible.

The great importance of the matter on one hand, and on the other hand my apparent failure at least in part to convey my meaning, may perhaps excuse my offering some further desultory remarks on the topic of activity. Some writers wish to build on this as an ultimate fact, and this is the position taken (as I understand) by Professor Ward in his book on *Naturalism*. I recognize, as we all must, the great merit of Professor Ward's work, but with regard to this fundamental point I am unable to see that he has made any serious attempt to explain and to defend his view. I venture to think that he has even failed at least in part to understand the objections to which it is exposed. And though I readily admit that there may be some misunderstanding on my side, I cannot suppose that Professor Ward's position does not call for further explanation.

(a) In the first place, however much activity is 'a fact of experience', a question may still be raised as to the ultimate truth and reality of activity. Apparently Professor Ward would consider that any question of this kind is inadmissible, but I have been unable to ascertain what his position on this point really is. He does not of course say that activity, having no sense or meaning, therefore cannot have a meaning which is unsatisfactory, and that we therefore cannot be called upon to state the sense in which the term is used. Professor Ward does not again (as I understand) claim that the content of activity is simple, and that in this it is like, for instance, the aspects of mere pleasure or mere sensation, and is a simple experience which we define not by internal analysis but by designation. And in short with regard to the objection raised against the internal inconsistency of activity I am unable to find in what Professor Ward's answer consists. On the other hand I have been unable to discover how, if such an objection is not met, his doctrine can be sustained.

(b) And the objection which can be urged from the side of our apprehension of activity has not, I venture to think,



been met by Professor Ward. If against a 'Naturalist' it is argued that the 'Naturalist' is in possession of an idea, which possession, if his own theory is true, is in fact not intelligible, Professor Ward, I understand, is prepared to endorse this argument and to agree that such an objection, if made good, is fatal. But he seems hardly to realize that the same kind of objection with the same possible consequence has to be answered by himself with regard to activity. If a man is in possession of this idea and if he cannot account for the possession, his doctrine must somewhere, I submit, be fatally defective. This is why even beyond psychology our apprehension of activity must be dealt with and gives rise to a most important problem. And a writer can hardly (it seems to me) get rid of this problem by insisting that he at least distinguishes the fact of activity from our consciousness of the fact—for such an answer would not, at least to my mind, appear to be relevant to the issue. The real issue to my mind is whether Professor Ward being in possession of the idea of activity—a fact which I presume is admitted—can give an answer to the question how he has become possessed of that idea, an answer, I mean, which judged by his own view is intelligible and consistent. And I cannot find that Professor Ward has even addressed himself seriously to this question.<sup>1</sup> The reader, I take it, is not helped by the assurance that activity and passivity are 'facts of experience' and that we have an 'immediate experience' of them. For no one until otherwise informed can know what such

<sup>1</sup> I presume that I should be wrong in taking the footnote on p. 44 of the article on 'Psychology' to be an attempt to deal with the subject. In the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy* for October, 1882, p. 378, Professor Ward has himself noticed the above question as one which requires an answer, and has gone on to indicate what that answer might be. But if in the year 1900 I tried to show that the brief indication was unintelligible or untenable, I might well be accused of serious unfairness. It is to be presumed, I imagine, that Professor Ward must have modified his opinion as to the objection's force, or as to the answer which could be produced to meet it. I at least understand him now to proceed as if his foundation were no longer threatened by any such objection which, if not met, would be fatal. In fact, if this were not so, the reader, I submit, would have just ground for complaint.

ambiguous phrases are meant to convey, and I may perhaps be allowed to illustrate this by a familiar example. If an unknown drug is administered to me without my knowledge I may next day have an immediate experience of its effects in my feelings and thoughts, but if I said, 'This is why I talk and am able to talk of this drug', my assertion might be criticized. And even if I insisted perhaps that nothing else in my experience ever felt like that, I should hardly by this addition have made myself consistent. 'What you call your experience', I should be told, 'is one thing and the knowledge of this drug is another thing. We fail to see how from the first you can arrive at the second. Either your knowledge comes from elsewhere or it is no knowledge at all.' And the same thing surely may be said about an experience of activity. If we assert this experience to be in any sense an apprehension of activity as activity, then, it seems to me, we are bound to reply to the question, What is contained in this apprehension? If on the other hand what we experience does not contain in itself, and so reveal to us, activity as activity, we surely cannot refuse to reply when asked whence comes the knowledge we possess. And if we cannot answer intelligibly our account has surely broken down and as a whole is ruined. And though one might be very wrong in supposing this to be the case with Professor Ward's doctrine of activity, yet until he has applied himself seriously to meet the above objection, his position, so far as I see, must be regarded as hypothetical or even as precarious.

(c) It is, at least in the interest of philosophy, a matter for regret that, before attempting to build Theism or anything else on such an ill-defined principle, Professor Ward should not have given us a serious inquiry into its nature. It is unprofitable surely to assert of the subject that it 'only *is*, as it is active' (p. 245) when not even the meaning to be given to such a formula is accurately fixed. It would, for instance, be one thing to affirm that there is no being as apart from activity, and another thing to attempt to deny the distinction between them. To assert the mere identity

of being and activity does to my mind, after some attempts to avert this result, really end in what is not intelligible. But this, so far as I understand, is not the doctrine which Professor Ward adopts. And yet even the assertion that apart from activity there is no being at all is to my mind, if not clearly false, at least highly questionable, and on this point my state of mind is surely not exceptional. In short, whatever may be the view adopted by Professor Ward as to the relation of activity to being, there will I submit be difficulties which call for discussion and which cannot be disposed of by unexplained assertions. And at the risk of showing prejudice I will add that an inquiry by Professor Ward into these fundamental matters would be far more interesting than any attempt to build on hypotheses, or on assertions, or on the ruins of Naturalism.

## XXIV

### ON ACTIVE ATTENTION

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MY object in this paper is naturally not to attempt a complete treatment of its topic. I was led to write it because, in endeavouring to make clear the essence of volition, I found myself embarrassed constantly by the claims of attention. And rightly or wrongly I resolved to remove beforehand this recurring obstacle. I am therefore going to try, so far as I can, first to fix the meaning of active attention in accordance with the ordinary usage of language, and next to deal with a certain number of questions concerning it. That the usage of language to some extent varies I readily admit, but this variation is on the whole, I think, consistent with one central meaning. And in psychology to employ words in a sense opposed to their everyday signification is surely most ill-advised. It is difficult to suppose that the established use has no reason behind it. It is hard to imagine that the reader and the writer could ever wholly free their minds from the influence of association even if that were irrational. And in short, if we cannot employ terms in something like their ordinary sense, it is better to make new ones than to abuse and pervert the old. In the case of attention the abuse has even been carried to such a point that attention has been used to include and cover what every one does and must call a state of inattention. Such an attempt must naturally be short-lived, and we need not trouble ourselves to discuss it. It will repay us better to ask what is the ordinary meaning of our term and what that meaning implies. In this article I shall take attention always (unless the reader is warned) in the sense of *active* attending.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this and in some other points I am departing to some extent (it seems not worth while to ask in detail how much) from an article in *M.* xi. No. 43 [*E.* x]. I must beg the reader also not to forget that throughout the

And I do not mean by this merely a state in which in some sense we may be said both to be active and to attend. I mean by it a state in which the attention itself is involved in and follows from an agency on our part.

I will at once proceed to consider the facts in the light of ordinary language. If I am sitting at ease with my mind not dwelling, as we say, on any subject, but wandering aimlessly as I regard some well-known scene, I am what every one would call inattentive generally. If we keep to ordinary language I am not attending here to anything at all. I am occupied by no one object, and even that mode of sensation and feeling, which may be said to predominate, is both diffused and feeble. Let us suppose now that a sudden and acute pain shoots through me, or that without warning a gun is fired close by, my state at once is altered. These things at once occupy me—there is no doubt of that—but am I to be said at once therefore to attend to them? If we use attention strictly for *active* attention we are unable to say this unconditionally. My state becomes attention if I go about consciously to get rid of my pain, or again if I begin to wonder what it is; and the same thing holds, of course with a difference, in the case of my hearing the shot. And I naturally and probably under the conditions do so go on to attend. But suppose that at once, recognizing the sound as the report of a gun, I throw myself flat on the ground, have we, with merely so much as that, got active attention? I should deny this, and I should deny it again even if my act has proceeded from the idea of escaping danger and has thus been a real volition.<sup>1</sup> For attention in the first place, if we follow the usage of language, must have an object, and in the second place it must involve some dwelling on and maintenance of that object, and so by consequence some delay. If in the present article I am assuming that volition consists in the self-realization of an idea. There is obviously no space in which to discuss this question here. I may refer the reader provisionally to *M.* xiii [*E.* xiv], and again to *M.* n.s. x [*E.* xxiii]. But I propose to deal with the question in future articles.

<sup>1</sup> For the justification of this see the references given above. The arbitrary limitation of volition to acts of choice is in my view quite indefensible.

animal hearing a sound pricks its ears and springs at once, and, as we say, by one action, we should not call that attending. But if it pricks its ears and then pauses, we at least perhaps have got attention. There must in brief be an object and its maintenance, and hence we must proceed to inquire about the meaning of these terms.

The mere having of an object or objects is by itself not attention. If I am sitting listlessly, as described above, it cannot be said that I perceive no object. For I certainly have objects before me though I attend to none of them. There may even be some prominent object in my visual field, or there may be some predominant object of hearing, such as the sound of a machine, and yet I need attend actively to neither. And I may be assailed by ideas which are certainly objects, and which maintain themselves, as we say, even actively, and yet I need not attend to them. I may succeed in not attending to them if and so far as, whenever they recur, I do nothing to maintain them but turn instinctively to something different. Thus to treat attention as the state generally where I have an object would be at least to come into collision with language. I do not attend by the mere perception or thought of an object. I begin to attend when in a further sense I go on to make this my object.

To attend in the proper sense I must by my action support and maintain an object in myself, but we have attention only so far as I maintain it theoretically or at least perceptively. Attention alters something, that is clear, and it is so far practical, but in the sense of altering the existence of the object it is not practical at all. If I turn a handle and so keep up a sound, that by itself is not attention and it need not even in any way imply it. If I turn the screw of a microscope, my act is not in itself attending, and it need not involve attention to the object, though in most cases in fact it does so. If again I move my eyes or my hands and so gain knowledge about an object, that action in the first place need not involve attention. And in any case, so far as I alter the actual thing, that alteration will fall outside of the attention itself. So far as in general

my act can be said to create the existence of the object, we have so far not got attention at all. My act is attention only so far as it supports and maintains the ideal presence of the object in my perception. Thus attention is practical, but it is not practical except as altering myself and as so causing the object, unaltered by me, to maintain and to develop itself before me and in me.

In more familiar language we may say that my end in attention<sup>1</sup> is to maintain an object before me with a view to gain knowledge about it. My aim is thus to develop the object ideally for me as it is in itself, and so to know it. But in saying this we must be on our guard against a possible error, and we must not confine knowledge to a purely intellectual cognition. For clearly I may attend to a beautiful object, while I may not be seeking theoretically to understand and comprehend it. I may desire merely in a wide sense to apprehend the object, as when for instance I listen attentively to an air, or with attention observe the development of some pleasure or pain in myself.<sup>2</sup> The process in both cases is in a wide sense theoretical or ideal, because there is an object in it to which the whole process is referred as an adjective. The object preserves for me

<sup>1</sup> More accurately 'my end so far as attention is concerned'. My main end may be practical and may seek to alter the thing itself, and the ideal development of the thing in me may be a mere means involved in and consequent on this. See more below.

<sup>2</sup> So far as the pleasure or pain coming from an object qualifies as an adjective this object for me—or again is taken as an adjective qualifying my self—I can of course attend to it. Otherwise, and if the object merely gives pleasure, I can of course attend to the object, but so far not to the pleasure or pain since that is so far not 'objective'. Even if (to pass to another point) an object remains unaltered and does not change when maintained by attention, we may still properly call this permanence the ideal development of the object. The object preserves its ideal identity through the process of time and the change of context, and qualifies itself by that process. When Dr. Stout (*Manual*, p. 65; ed. 2, p. 71) makes attention aim at 'the fuller presentation of an object', I quite agree with him, if, that is, I may interpret 'presentation' in the sense of my text. I am not sure, however, that lower down in the same paragraph Dr. Stout does not teach a divergent doctrine. On the subject of attention I am indeed forced in some respects to dissent very strongly from some doctrines that have been urged by Dr. Stout, but I need not enter on that here.

its identity and unity, and develops itself in the process before me as an individual whole, a whole in which the beginning is qualified by the end, and where on the other hand my act does not make the object to be other than it is. Any such process must deserve the title of ideal or theoretical knowledge, if that is taken in a wide sense, and we need not go on to inquire here how it is related to understanding and truth and to a more strictly intellectual mode of cognition.

It may be objected here that in attention more is really done than to develop the object ideally. The object (it may be said) is always made more prominent and is strengthened by the process, and attention therefore alters the object as well as maintains it. To this I reply that I will ask later whether in attention the object is actually strengthened, and if so in what sense. But any such strengthening, even if it exists always in fact, is none the less, I would urge, accidental. It is an alteration of the object's psychical existence which falls outside the character of attention itself, and is as external to it as are again its physical effects. The only change in psychical existence which really belongs to the essence of attention is the maintenance in and for perception of the object itself. And the object itself, though developed by the process, cannot be taken as changed by it. And, if it is altered otherwise, its alteration must be regarded as accidental.

Attention is thus negative of any mere psychical interference with the object and its knowledge in me. And it might be said that attention therefore is directed not at all upon the object, but simply on myself. The essence of the process (it may be urged) is not to maintain the ideal development of the object, but merely to keep open my self to its appearance in me. Attention will thus consist in the suppression of any psychical fact which would interfere with the object, and its essence therefore is not positive at all, but merely negative. But any such view, though it perhaps might not take us wrong in practice, is really one-sided and in the end inconsistent with itself. And a true doctrine about the general nature of negation would



assure us that any such view is false in principle. You cannot, in short, anywhere or in any way negate except from a positive basis. And you cannot suppress in particular whatever is to interfere with a special positive development, unless you have some idea as to what that development is and keep its requirements in mind. But if so, the process can be seen at once to be more than barely negative. If, in making attention to consist essentially in a mere alteration of yourself, you do not include in that alteration the end and object for which it is made, you clearly have not defined attention nor have you said what you must really have meant. But otherwise you have qualified the process essentially by the positive development of the object. The real development in an ideal form of the real object itself is in fact the positive end<sup>1</sup> which against hindrance is pursued in attention. Our scruples or our prejudices may not allow us to accept what I will call this evident doctrine. But, if so, we have preferred to make the general fact of knowledge and truth, I do not say inexplicable, but impossible. The merely negative character of attention would rest in short upon a superficial error.

Attention implies (we have seen) the ideal presence of an object, but it is not confined, we must remember, to thought in the narrower sense of that term. In what we call pure thought the object is not merely in some way developed without loss of identity, but it must itself seem to develop itself by a movement which, if not intrinsic, is at least ideal. On the other hand attention and knowledge are obviously not limited to this. For their result may come from observation and it may be given by sense-experience, and it may depend upon matter of fact without us or within us. At the same time we saw that an ideal synthesis is involved in attention, and the process may therefore be certainly said in a sense to involve thought. When I attend to a sequence of mere fact external or internal, there must be for me in the process a unity which

<sup>1</sup> Where not itself the direct end, it is included in the end as means and is so the indirect end.

is not merely given but is ideal. There is a single object which is qualified as a whole and at once by the series, and such a qualification cannot be merely given as a succession of facts. If we use in a wide sense the terms 'thought' and 'idea', attention always, we must say, in this sense involves thinking, and it involves a knowledge, the essential nature of which is to be held together by an idea.

But attention in the sense of *active* attention means more than any kind of mere knowledge. It implies (as we have seen) also a volition on my part, and we may with advantage once more here consider the actual facts. Suppose that I am sitting either listless or absorbed,<sup>1</sup> and that I see perhaps a rabbit move or a bird fly across the scene, do I necessarily give them my attention? If again I passively, as we say, accept the current and course of my own thoughts, must I be said also in every case to be actively attending to them? If we follow the usages of language I think we must deny this.<sup>2</sup> We cannot hold that in every such case my active attention must have been present, when nothing (as we should say) has excited and arrested it. Something necessary to make attention has been wanting, and that something is certainly not here the ideal identity of the object. For this may have been present, and may have been present even in a purely logical form, and yet attention itself may have been absent. And thus the reason why I have not actively attended cannot be that I have not

<sup>1</sup> These states are very far of course from being the same, and it would be a serious mistake for some purposes to confuse them. I think that they have been so confused with a bad result in connexion with the words *distract* and *distraction*.

<sup>2</sup> My attitude towards the perceived activity of my own thoughts may in fact be often felt as disagreeably passive and as anything but active. There are statements made on this point which I read with astonishment. And to urge here that a feeling of my passivity must to some extent imply a feeling of my activity would in my opinion be indefensible, at least apart from an inquiry into the meaning of these terms. We want on this whole subject, I will venture to add, less prejudice and dogma and more inquiry, and I believe that in time we shall get it. The appearance of Mr. Loveday's interesting article, since these words were written, has tended to confirm this belief. See *M.* n.s. x. 455, 'Theories of Mental Activity', by T. Loveday.

thought. The reason is that I have not done anything myself to support and to maintain the object. There have been from time to time objects, each with an identity and an ideal development however short, but I on my part have done nothing at all towards actively developing them. The idea of the object was in short really not 'my idea'. It did not go before, and itself, directly or by implication, prescribe and bring about its own existence in me. There was, in other words, no will, and without my willing I do not actively attend. Even where, as in pure thought, an idea develops itself theoretically, we have not got will unless the foregoing idea of that development has itself been thus the cause of its own existence.<sup>1</sup> And where this feature is absent we assuredly have no active attention. In every observation and in all experiencing, if it is indeed actively attentive, we have, in however vague a form, the idea of my perceiving that which is to happen to the object, or we have at least an end which involves as means the ideal development of the object, an end which is felt in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here *E.* xiv. 272-4. It may indeed be contended that *all* thinking does in the end imply will in this sense. Without pausing to discuss this view I will state in passing that I certainly cannot accept it. Of course, to pass to another point, I should agree that at first in the main the moving ideas in will are practical. The idea of myself, for instance, catching a beast causes me under certain conditions to keep still and to watch the movements of the object. And it can be argued that in the end every theoretical interest is thus ultimately practical. I cannot discuss such a large matter in passing, but I do not think that such a contention in its crude form is defensible. It is one thing to hold that no theoretical or aesthetic interest is in the end barely theoretical or aesthetic. It is quite another thing to propose to subordinate such interests to what is barely practical, without even asking whether a mere practical interest is not itself also in the end incomplete.

Since writing the above I have had the advantage of reading Professor Royce's interesting book, *The World and the Individual*. I hope that at some future time I may be able to discuss the doctrine there advocated with regard to the internal meaning and purpose contained in all ideas. As I understand this view, I however find myself unable to accept it. I cannot see how in the end and ultimately it is an idea which makes the selection which takes place in knowledge, and I have not succeeded in apprehending clearly the relation of thought to will as it is conceived by Professor Royce. I hope however to profit by further study of this volume.

that development to be carrying itself out. And this idea of end operates in determining the process in which itself ceases to be a mere idea and becomes actual fact. Active attention in short everywhere implies volition.<sup>1</sup>

But in what sense (this is now the question) does active attention imply will? We must here on each side be on our guard against error. In the first place attention is not the same thing as will. We have noticed already that in its absence volition may be present, and I shall hereafter return to this point. I shall therefore dismiss it here and ask how attention, itself not being will, implies will in its essence. I will begin by dealing with a mistake of a different kind. Attention certainly does not imply volition in the sense that all attention is willed directly. The attention itself is not always the aim of my will. It may or it may not be itself my end, according to the circumstances of the case, and the facts, as soon as we look at them, seem to put this beyond doubt. I may often of course have an idea of attending to this or that, and so go on to attend to it, but no one could say that apart from this there is no active attention. For, in carrying out some purpose without me or within me, I may be undoubtedly attending, and yet, having felt no tendency to wander mentally from my aim, I may as undoubtedly never have directly willed to attend. In short attention is a state which may itself be willed directly, but which certainly need not be so, and which far more usually is not so willed. Its essence is not to be itself an end and object of volition, and it is enough that it should be implied in an end and object which as a state of mind it subserves.

Wherever an end, external or internal, practical or theoretical,<sup>2</sup> involves in and for its realization the maintenance and support of an ideal object before me and in me—that is active attention. If I will to capture an animal, this purpose may imply the keeping of its movements, and

<sup>1</sup> The doctrine of an attention contrary to will, which is advocated by, for instance, Mr. Shand, in *M. n.s.* iv. 452, seems to me quite indefensible, if at least attention is to mean active attention.

<sup>2</sup> These distinctions, the reader should remember, are not the same.

perhaps also my own, steadily before me. If I mean to solve a problem, the idea of its solution entails my dwelling theoretically on the means. If I see and desire to go on seeing some show, that idea in carrying itself out involves my abstinence from distracting movements and thoughts, and it involves positively the keeping my eyes and mind open to the continuous perception of the object. In all these cases the attention comes from my will<sup>1</sup> and it is active attention, but you cannot say that the attending itself is itself that end which I willed. But it becomes this end, and it is this end, where the delay and the hindrance to the realization of my idea is apprehended as in some way consisting in my failing and distraction. The attention itself then goes on to be included explicitly in my idea of the end, and the state of attending is now itself directly willed, and not as before implied incidentally and even conditionally.

Active attention, we may say roughly, is the dwelling ideally on an object so as to do something practical or theoretical to that object or with regard to it. But this dwelling is certainly not always itself included in the idea of my end, it is certainly not always itself the direct aim of my will. If you take a state such as observation and active expectancy,<sup>2</sup> that state will without doubt always

<sup>1</sup> The reader will not forget that for me there is no will at all without an idea, and that volition is essentially the self-realization of an idea. Dr. Stout (*Manual*, pp. 248-51; ed. 2, p. 258) holds that we may have attention and even search without an idea of the object. I cannot agree that in any such case we have a right to speak of active attention, and if I agreed to this I can see then no reason why I should not descend even lower, and speak of attention being present even there where there is perhaps not even so much as perception. The pathological case, as Dr. Stout reports it, does not seem to me to show that the subject had in each case no idea (in fact I think it shows the contrary), but merely that his ideas were exceedingly vague and exceedingly restricted. But, if the opposite could in some way be shown, I should without the least hesitation refuse to admit the presence of either mental search or active attention in such a case.

<sup>2</sup> The assertion that all expectation implies will is in my opinion indefensible. What we call active expectancy and a sustained attitude towards the future does certainly imply will, but expectation is used also,

include attention, but it will not include in every case the will so to attend. My immediate end here is to get to know more about the object, to realize it ideally, with or without a further end theoretical or practical. In this direct end is implied the adoption of the necessary means; in other words, here my keeping the object before my mind and my assisting it to develop itself in me. But this assistance of mine is not in every case itself specifically willed. It is not itself directly willed except where its absence, actual or possible, has been brought before me. The delay or the failure in the realization of my object is one thing, and my failure in respect of this is another thing, and it is only the second of these which calls forth a direct will to attend.

Active attention may therefore be defined as such a theoretic or perceptive occupancy of myself by an object as is due to, and involved in, a volition of some sort directed on that object. The ideal development of the object in me is thus, directly or indirectly, the realization of my will. And whatever psychical support, positive or negative, is required to maintain this development, issues therefore from my will and must be regarded as my work. Wherever, on the other hand, an ideal content is so interesting in itself as of itself to produce, apart from my will, whatever is required for its own psychical maintenance, that maintenance is not active attention and cannot be taken as the work of myself.

The meaning so far given to active attention will, I think, be found in the main to agree with the ordinary employment of that term. The various divergent senses,

I should have said, with a wider meaning in which no will is implied. Expectation certainly need not always involve what we call observation. A mere suggestion as to the future or an anticipation of it on which I do not dwell, and again even a judgement about the future, need, I should say, none of them imply attention or will, and they clearly need not involve desire. Expectation, as containing essentially attention and a will to know, is used, in short, in a sense which is artificially narrowed (cf. *E.* xiv. 261-2). I have already mentioned that I cannot accept the doctrine that all interest is practical.

in which we commonly make use of 'attention', will be seen by us to waver naturally and pass one into the other. And that sense, which in the above account I have tried to fix and define, hits, I venture to think, the point amid these variations which may be called their centre. In our ordinary use the chief divergence is between active and passive attention. The latter seems equivalent to what may be called the mere occupancy of myself.<sup>1</sup> A sensation or a feeling or an idea, if these are sufficiently strong or sufficiently influential, may be said to dominate me or engross me, or also perhaps again to move me, in an eminent sense. Attention here, it will be seen, may be intelligent but is not so essentially, and if, following this line, we make active attention to be the willed procurement of such an occupancy or domination, the element of intelligence, of ideal dwelling on the object, if present, is once more not essential. The article which some years ago I published in *Mind*, xi, No. 43 [E. x] did in fact follow this line, and in the sense which it

<sup>1</sup> It would be a reasonable proposal to limit this wide use of 'passive attention', and to apply the term only in cases where I am occupied by an object before me. The fact that my organs and my mind are given a certain 'direction' towards an object, may perhaps be taken as implied in the ordinary use of 'attention'. To such a limitation I should not be averse, so long as two points were kept clear. (i) In the first place the aspect of exclusive domination is (we must remember) quite essential, and this aspect is not contained in the mere fact that my mind possesses an object. We have seen that, where I have a variety of objects before me, I may be inattentive to some of them or even to all. (ii) In the second place, even where an object occupies me and so I passively attend to it, if its control over my mind comes from the activity of the object itself, this control is not my work and there is no active attending. Now these two essential features, first of domination and next of maintenance by my activity, will tend, I fear, to be obscured by the proposed limitation of 'passive attention'. For always, in having an object before me, my mind naturally may be said in a sense to be 'active' and, if so, this mental state naturally will tend to be called active attention. And it will be called so where my mental state could not be fairly taken as my own work, and it will be called so even where we have not the domination which is involved in passive attention. Hence, in the presence of this misleading tendency with all the confusion which it entails, I think it safer to take the line which is followed in the text. But the limitation, I agree, would keep us nearer to everyday usage.

gave to active attention it to some extent conflicts with the account I now offer. And this is a point which perhaps we must be content to decide arbitrarily, in whichever way we decide it. But with regard to attention, which is not active on the part of myself but consists in my domination or passive occupancy, the account which I have given above does not exclude such a meaning. Whether in psychology we are to use attention in this sense I do not attempt to decide, but I am sure that it is a sense, the existence of which we cannot afford to forget. Where an idea extrudes others and dominates me simply and so produces volition, my attention to the idea evidently will so far be but passive. Where after the advent of a sensation or a perception I act at once and without delay, my attention, so far as it exists, once more is passive. The action itself certainly is not an attending, and the action may even be not psychical and only physical. And we must decide in the same way where a sensation is, as we say, 'apperceived' and is modified by the activity of what we call a 'disposition'. This will not be my active attending unless I can be said as a result of my will to maintain and to dwell ideally on the object. Activity is present, if you like, and this activity again may be said, if you please, to cause in a certain sense attention to the object. But the attention once again, so far as it exists, will itself be but passive, and the activity, to whatever subject I refer it, will most certainly not be active attention employed by my self.<sup>1</sup> For we do not have that until, as we have seen, we have an idea and a volition.

I will now go on to show briefly how the main senses of attention pass naturally one into the other. If we begin with attention in the low and perhaps improper sense of psychical domination or occupancy, such a psychical fact must normally tend to become the object of a perception. And a prominent object of perception, even apart from its practical side, must tend naturally to become a thing to which I actively attend. It will probably, if it lasts, be

<sup>1</sup> I shall touch on this subject again lower down, and in the meantime may remind the reader that the activity here and the subject of it are taken by some psychologists to be simply physical.



dealt with in some volition theoretically or practically, and this will tend to imply a dwelling on it more or less directly, and an ideal maintenance and support thus proceeding from myself. For the suppression of conditions in myself hostile to the undisturbed presence of the idea seems involved in its continuance and development before me. And this suppression, we have supposed, will arise, not directly from the object itself, but at least in part from that object as a means to and as included in my end.<sup>1</sup> And with this we clearly have arrived at an active attending. And such attention tends to pass further into the attention which is itself the end and object of will. For so far as there is mental wandering the original purpose will tend to be frustrated, and hence the remedy of that frustration, if the purpose holds, will normally be suggested as a fresh idea. And this idea realizing itself is itself in general my will to be attentive actively. I do not think that any account of attention, which differs materially from the above, will be able in the same way fairly to do justice to the facts alike of language and of experience.

Active attention is not the same as thought or will, but in its essence it implies each, and it therefore possesses the characteristics of both while identical with neither. I will proceed at the cost of some repetition to enlarge on this thesis, using thought as before in a wide sense so as to cover the entire theoretical attitude.

(i) In the first place attention is not wholly identical with thought, and thought can certainly exist without active attention. Even if thought implied attention, the attention itself would be but one aspect of the thought,

<sup>1</sup> It may be asked whether that ideal development of the object, which is a means to my end, may not in itself become so interesting as of itself to engross me, and whether in this case we any longer have active attention. Any difficulty in answering this question arises, I think, from the difficulty of making in fact the abstraction required. So long as and so far as we take the end to remain dominant and controlling, we must speak, I should say, of an active attention. For, so long and so far, the repression of competing psychical factors is taken as coming, not from the mere idea itself, but from the end willed by me.

for the attention itself does not qualify the object. But it is not even true that all thought implies active attention, and it cannot be said that in all thought I actively maintain and support an ideal object. There must certainly in thought be on the positive side an ideal continuity, and on the negative side an absence of psychical interference. But no one would say naturally that in all cases I actively procure this result. We might perhaps as naturally say that in all thought I am passive, while the object itself actively produces the result in me. But neither of these extremes would really be tenable. (a) Let us consider first what happens when, as we say, my thought is concentrated and I am fully absorbed in it. Let us take the case of an intense intellectual or aesthetic activity, where the object seems to develop itself before us without help or hindrance. If you insist that here in all cases and throughout I myself am actively attending, I would ask you what it is that I myself am doing with or to the object or myself. And for myself I cannot find that I at least am *always* actively attending. For so far as the ideal development of the object is interesting in itself, the psychical control over my mind is naturally taken to proceed not from myself but direct from the object. (b) Let us examine next my state where, as we should say, I am inattentive altogether. Can we assert that in such a case there actually is no thought at all? My mind is wandering doubtless, and there is no one single object which emerges from the general background and develops itself ideally throughout. But are there no passing objects here that develop themselves ideally before me even for a moment and to the very slightest extent? I cannot myself see how in the face of facts such a view could be sustained. (c) Where I am not (as we say) generally inattentive, but am occupied by, and am perhaps also actively attending to, one continuous central train of thought, is there outside of this central train not any recognition and judgement? It would be, I think, difficult to deny wholly the existence of such thoughts, however passing and sporadic, and yet, if we cannot, then apart from or outside of our active attending

we shall once more probably have found thought, and shall certainly have found at least the fact of 'objective reference'. We may in any case rest our conclusion on the two previous instances, if about the third we are inclined to doubt. Thought may certainly exist apart from active attention, and attention itself is not wholly identical with thought.

(ii) Active attention (to pass to another point) is not the same as will, though it involves will in its essence. Will can undoubtedly exist in the absence of active attention, and, even where that is present, will must still in a sense be superior to it and prior. (a) Let us first take the case where, without pausing to think about my suggested action, I act at once. We are to suppose that there is present here an idea of what I am about to do, for without such an idea we should certainly not have volition. But in the case supposed the idea realizes itself forthwith without any further ideal development, and in such a case we have in the proper sense no attention. I certainly perceive an object, and that object may, as we say, violently strike me, and I may also be dominated and overpowered by the idea of my action on the object, but with all this, if I go on to act at once, I do not actively attend. My attention will under certain conditions, it is true, follow as a consequence, but it has so far had no time in which to develop itself, and so far in fact it is not there. (b) We may do well in this connexion to consider also the case where my attention is willed actually and as such. There is here a special will; a will, that is, to produce the state of attending. We have therefore present here the idea of myself attending, and this idea carrying itself out into existence is the special will to attend. But if any one maintained that this idea also itself must be actively attended to, he would be surely opposing himself to the evidence of fact. And if we keep to the facts, we must admit here the presence of a will which is itself certainly not attention but which on the contrary conditions it. The idea of myself attending dominates me, and the idea so produces the existence of my attention, but clearly I do not at the same time actively attend to my idea. That would require a

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further idea and a further volition, and we should thus be driven to enter on a fruitless regress. We assuredly never should arrive at an idea at once the ultimate condition of my attention and itself ultimately attended to. But probably no one could hold with us that will is implied in active attention and that an idea is essential to will, and at the same time maintain that this idea itself must be an object of attention.<sup>1</sup> If then our premises are right we may conclude that attention and will differ, and that attention implies, while on the other hand it is not implied in, volition. We must insist that without attention there may be will, and that where both are present both are not the same or even co-ordinate. Attention is an applied will, and it is therefore in this sense something clearly subordinate and lower.

(iii) We have seen that attention<sup>2</sup> is not the same as either thought or volition. But on the other hand, since it implies these, it will possess the characteristics of both, and I will go on to enlarge for a space on this head. I shall not attempt to exhaust the subject or in discussing it to follow a strict order, but I will offer some remarks which perhaps may be useful.

(a) Attention, we have seen, involves thought, if thought is taken in the general sense of the perceptive or theoretical attitude. Attention has always, in other words, an object qualified in me by ideal adjectives. And this attitude implies on my part a certain passivity. In attention I must be passive first in the sense that I do not go about to alter the object, but receive and accept it. And there is again beside this a further sense in which in attending I am passive. My self must more or less be occupied and affected by the object, and I (we may say) must suffer this object as mine and in me. And more or less clearly I must also feel and be

<sup>1</sup> If we believe that there is will and active attention without the presence of an idea, of course in that case the argument of the text does not apply; but I have already dismissed this doctrine. What in such a case the fact of a will to will really would mean I do not know, and it would be unprofitable for me to consider.

<sup>2</sup> The reader, I hope, remembers that apart from a special warning he is to take attention as *active* attention.

aware of this sufferance. In fact a feeling of this sort, which is present always in active attention, may go some way towards obscuring there my sense of being active. I shall very soon return to this and shall point out something which this felt passivity implies, but for the moment I will pass on to notice another mark of attention.

(b) Attention, being will, must of course give us, beside the sense of passivity, a sense also of being active, though this sense again can under certain conditions be weakened. And, as will, attention involves naturally the more or less clear awareness of my active relation to the object of my attention. The practical attitude implies always within what is experienced the opposition of my self to the not-self, and I must also be aware of these terms and of their relation. The same thing holds with a difference in the theoretical attitude, for there the relation and its terms must again be experienced, though not quite in the same sense.<sup>1</sup> I cannot properly attend without an experience of my self as passively affected and again as actively affecting. This awareness may be present of course in very various degrees of distinctness. It may be vague feeling or again it may be clear self-consciousness,<sup>2</sup> but it never fails to be present.

I will before proceeding lay stress on a point which I have mentioned already. We have, I presume, undoubtedly a sense and an experience of being active and passive, and I mean by this that we have an actual awareness of our selves in both these characters. But unless both self and not-self and their relation are actually experienced—and I mean by this are present within the experienced as parts or aspects or features of its content—I cannot see how a sense of activity or passivity, in attention or in anything else, is to be either explicable or possible. To be aware of activity and passivity without being aware of that which is active or passive, and without this also entering itself into

<sup>1</sup> I cannot enter on this matter here.

<sup>2</sup> I think that Mr. Shand is more or less exaggerating when (in *M.* n.s. iii. 459) he speaks of 'a clear awareness' in all attention. The awareness certainly always is present, but in what sense and to what degree can it be always called 'clear'?

the content of the experienced, is to my mind in the end a thing quite without meaning.<sup>1</sup> Others perhaps may understand how this is possible or at least may know that it happens, but in this understanding or knowledge they fail to carry me with them. And in their dealing, so far as they can be said to deal, with this fact of experienced activity, too many psychologists excite in me an astonishment which does not end in admiration. There is doubtless here, as we are told, a familiar distinction. There is the activity of a thing which is aware that it is active, and there is again the activity of a thing which has no such feeling and experience. We all in this latter sense should speak of the activity of a volcano or of a pill, and in this latter sense we may also in psychology make use of the term 'active'. And I might claim, even myself, without any very prolonged struggle to have possessed myself of this distinction. But having perhaps risen so far there remains a point at which I am still left behind. I fail to perceive how this distinction, even when we have attained to it, can either rid us of the fact of experienced activity or can entitle us to treat such a fact with neglect. I still do not comprehend how the knowledge on our part of this distinction—I do not even see how the ignorance of it on the part of others—can excuse us when we make apparently no attempt to find out what experienced activity contains. Such neglect still appears to me to be in short inexcusable, even though apparently its consequences with a little good will may conduct us to Theism.

In attention then I am practically related to an object, but this practical relation (I would once more repeat) is of a limited kind. Attention, being will, must involve the alteration of existence, but on the other side, as attention, it must not alter its object. The object, we have seen, is not changed by me, but develops and reveals itself within me. What then is that existence of the object which really is changed by attention? It is, we answer, the psychical existence which belongs to the ideal development of the object. In all perceptive knowledge there are these two

<sup>1</sup> Compare here the remarks in *M.* N.S. x [E. xxiii].

sides which are indissolubly united. And in active attention we have on one side the willed self-revelation of the reality in and for me, and on the other side the psychical existence and the alteration of that existence without which the object cannot appear.<sup>1</sup> In attention you cannot, as we have seen, leave out either of these factors. Attention does not merely consist in the alteration of my psychical existence, and again it cannot even by an abstraction be regarded merely as the ideal movement of the object.

It is for this latter reason that we are not said to attend to anything except what is 'presented'. Mr. Shand (*M.* n.s. iii. 467) has noticed this usage, which appears to be well marked, but he has not, I think, pointed out the principle and the reason which underlies it. But the reason is that, being will, attention, like all will,<sup>2</sup> must be directed on immediate existence. We cannot, as Mr. Shand remarks, properly attend to another man's thoughts or to what is happening at the antipodes. And yet obviously I can attend to an idea, say the idea of attention. I can attend to it so far as it is taken as an idea existing now in and for me, and is therefore in this sense 'presented'. But if on the other hand you abstract from this side of the idea, I can attend to it no longer. And in speaking of another man's thoughts or of an event at the antipodes, you are naturally taken for the purpose in hand to abstract from

<sup>1</sup> I may perhaps once more be permitted to remind the reader of a vital point. That alteration of my psychical existence, which is involved in the maintenance of the ideal development, must not, where we have active attention, come direct from the object itself. For, wherever this happens, it is the object which is taken to be active and not I myself, and naturally with this we can speak no longer of my actively attending. In active attention the ideal development issues from and is implied in my will, and its maintenance also is thus taken to be willed and to proceed from myself.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Shand would, I understand, not admit this. He adduces (*M.* n.s. iv. 463) the fact of intention and resolve as a proof that will is not always an action on immediate existence. But except so far as intention and resolve are or imply such an action, I cannot agree that they are volition, and I think that when they are defined so as to exclude this aspect no one would call them will, or would call them anything beyond mere intention and mere resolve. I have touched on this subject in my *Appearance and Reality*, 410 = 463, and I shall have to recur to it in a future article.

the existence of these things in my knowledge. Hence you cannot attend to them, since it is of the essence of attention to imply this aspect of psychical existence and its alteration. Whether we can will an event outside of and quite apart from our psychical existence, as we certainly can desire it (*E.* xiv. 267), I need not here discuss. But my willed attention to such an event is, as we have just explained, self-contradictory.

(c) I will now briefly indicate another feature which belongs to attention in its character of will. Attention may itself vary in strength, while its object either does not vary at all or becomes indifferently more or less.<sup>1</sup> In the first place I may be occupied and dominated more or less by an object, while that object, taken in itself, remains the same. The object may in a certain character and on a certain scale remain of the same degree, while the range and extent to which my self is involved and disturbed may change indefinitely. But that occupation and disturbance is of course not the same thing as my active attending. My attention will in the proper sense be strong or weak exactly in the way in which we speak of volition possessing these characters. The strength of a volition is a topic to which in another article I hope to return, but it consists, we may say briefly, in the strength of the idea with which the self is identified and the amount of tension and struggle set up between this idea and existence. The extent, up to which the whole self is involved in this idea and is excited by this conflict and is identified with one side of it, gives I should say, the degree of volition. With this of course is connected the felt amount of pleasure and pain. On the other hand the experienced strain on an organ, unless so far as it is included in the above, does not count towards fixing the degree of the tension. And my passive occupancy by the object once again is not a factor, except so far as it subserves and increases the struggle. I do not think that I can with advantage here enlarge on this subject.

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<sup>1</sup> On the excessive ambiguity of a psychical 'more and less' see *M.* N.S. iv [*E.* xix].



We have perceived the essential nature of active attention, and have surveyed its main features from the side alike of volition and of thought. I have now to deal with some other problems, and in particular will discuss the meaning of the phrase 'object of attention'. But first I will glance at a question about attention's effects. Are we to say that it does or that it does not intensify its object? I could not here enter at length into this controversy, even if I were qualified to do so, but I will venture in passing to offer some remarks. Very serious ambiguity attaches not only to 'psychical intensity', but also, as we shall presently see, to attention's 'object'.<sup>1</sup> And without a previous inquiry into the meaning of these terms any discussion of the question, it seems to me, must in part lead to nothing. I should be inclined, if I might venture an opinion, to agree that attention does not *essentially* raise the strength of the object to which I attend, if and so long as this object is considered with reference to its own scale. If, that is, I am comparing one visual object with others, or even generally one psychical object with others, it is not of the essence of attention to raise in the scale one of these objects against another, so long as the scale enters into the whole object to which I really am attending. In other words, so far as you attend to a whole field of comparison, your attention does not essentially strengthen one part of this connected whole as against other parts. And, if this conclusion seems

<sup>1</sup> When Mr. Shand (*M. N.S.* iv. 464) says that, though attention does not arrest a disappearing sensation, will on its side may do so, I find the statement extremely ambiguous. If the will is simply to observe what happens within a certain field, the attention does not alter, or at least it ought not to alter, any one element in that complex. But on the other hand if the will is directed to an end which in itself involves a continued attention to some idea that naturally wavers—surely here the attention both can and often does arrest. From my point of view there would of course be no meaning in saying here that will can do that which attention cannot do. And so far as Mr. Shand understands by will an action that takes place without any idea of it, I radically dissent from any view of this kind. Mr. Shand's very interesting article is pervaded throughout by that ambiguity as to the nature of the 'object' which I am shortly to discuss. With regard to attention strengthening and not strengthening, the reader will find some instructive hesitation in Wundt, *Phys. Psych.*, chap. xv.

trivial, I can only reply by asking that it may at least not be forgotten. On the other hand I should agree that in general the effect of attention is to strengthen and to make clear,<sup>1</sup> and hence it may in fact incidentally falsify for the purpose of comparison some part of the object. I will not attempt further to enter on this matter, but before proceeding will offer a necessary remark. Attention is not something abstract and general, but is always individual and special. It is, we have seen, in effect a will to develop perceptively an object in me. And with regard to the nature of objects and their ways of development the greatest diversity prevails. And hence the strength and clearness which are essential to attention are not always one thing. They are in each case prescribed in amount and character by the particular matter and purpose. Whatever is enough to meet this particular demand will be sufficient, however little there may be of it, and only so much as this is really essential to attention. And a further end and purpose for which the attention exists, we must remember, is not the attention itself.

I will now proceed to an inquiry into the meaning of attention's 'object'. We can attend, as will presently be shown, to but one thing at a time. Except under certain abnormal conditions we may say that attention never really is divided, and before explaining this I will very briefly state why the fact must be so. There would be much more to say here if I had space at command, and I must content myself with giving what seems the main reason, while ignoring other aspects of the matter. Attention is single, we may say in a word, because will is single. And will is single not in the least because it is a faculty—there is too much of this kind of 'explanation' still on hand—but, we may say, because, if it were not single, it would have perished with its owners. Without the habit, and so in the end the principle, of doing and attending to one thing at a time, no creature could have maintained its existence and its race. This, I would repeat, is not offered as being by itself the whole reason, but it seems enough to show

<sup>1</sup> I cannot discuss here the meaning of 'clearness'.

why attention must normally be single. And with this I will pass on to inquire further about the 'object' of attention.

The object of attention, it will be said, is in fact very far from being single. And, it will be added, the object is so far from being one and not many, that authorities have differed and have even experimented about the extent of its plurality. And if the object really has all the time been one, this seems not possible. But it is more than possible, I reply, if the term 'object' is highly ambiguous, and if some psychologists have taken no account of its ambiguity. And I will forthwith state the main conclusions to which we shall be led. (1) There is in attention never more than one object, the several 'objects' being diverse aspects of or features within this. (2) Within the one object the unity is of very different kinds. (3) The nominal object and the real object may be very far from being the same, and the latter may contain within itself the former as a feature which is subordinated and even negated.

(1) The first of these heads I may pass over rapidly, since I can refer the reader here to the works of Professor James and Dr. Stout.<sup>1</sup> Apart from oscillation, and again apart from abnormal states, to attend to a plurality is always to attend to it as one object, and it is not possible to have really several objects of attention at once. The idea that we can do this comes from a want of insight into certain truths about the object, and I will at once, under (2) and (3), proceed to set these out. I would add that these truths have a wide and important bearing, and that any neglect of them can hardly fail to result in error.

(2 and 3) Attention, we all know, may in various degrees be diffused or be concentrated, but we may fail to perceive that this concentration and diffusion itself falls within the object and qualifies that. The extreme of diffused atten-

<sup>1</sup> Professor James, *Psych.* i. 405, ii. 569, teaches the right doctrine that there can be but one object. I do not know if it is quite consistent with this when, p. 409, he speaks of a plurality of 'entirely disconnected' systems of conceptions. Professor James's use of the word 'object' is however (i. 275 foll.) to the very last degree loose. As to oneness of attention, Dr. Stout teaches the right view throughout, *Anal. Psych.* i. 194, 211-12, 260.

tion would be, I presume, to observe impartially the whole detail of a complex scene. Its aim would be to observe at large everything which happens in and to this general object, to notice in other words any and every kind of change which takes place before my mind. But even in this supposed extreme we should have the unity of my world, as perceived here and now, and we should have the idea of my noticing whatever may happen in this field; and thus every diversity would be comprehended in and would be subordinate to the unity of this general object. The plurality even here would be the adjective of one thing, but the various features of this object would be of precisely the same rank. They are thus taken as simply co-ordinate, and they are coupled, we may say, by a mere 'and'. We are to attend to an object, the several contents of which are *A and B and C*, where *A*, *B*, and *C* are equal and all stand on exactly the same footing. A case so extreme, I at once hasten to add, cannot actually exist. If one is to observe really and in fact, one cannot observe really at large, but in order to act one must act, as we say, in a certain interest. But this means that our attention is never equally diffused, and that more or less we are compelled to select and to limit. An animal that searches when hungry will search not for anything and everything, but always for something more or less special while neglecting the rest; and the animal must thus always select more or less from the totality of what in general it perceives, and even from the limited totality of that which it sees or smells. The extreme of diffusion will therefore not be present actually and in fact, since with regard to the whole object some neglect and some selection is necessary.

There will in the first place be features of our scene, or in other words of the total object before us, to which we give really and in fact no attention at all. Our object is thus so far divided into two fields, one of inattention, we may say, and the other of attention. And passing by the first let us look at the second, the field and object of attention. Will all the details of that object be without exception attended to equally? Is none relatively neglected

while another is in comparison more prominent? Is everything within attention's object still simply co-ordinate and coupled still by a mere 'and', the one feature being no more important and attended to no more than is the other? If this is ever so, it assuredly is not so always, and, where it is not so, we have even within the chosen field at least some subordination. We find in short no longer a mere 'and'. It is not a case of attending simply to *A* and to *B*, but of attending to *A* while not omitting to notice *B*. And *B* has with this become lowered to the rank of a condition or circumstance. It is a mere adjective, a more or less subordinate detail in the object, and subordination once begun can be carried to a great length. We may find in short that in the end what we call attention's 'object' may be very different from the true object and aim of our attention. That true aim, that real object, may be even the exclusion or the destruction of the nominal object of attention.

We have in attention (*a*) that part of the whole object to which we do not at all attend. This must be distinguished on one side from all of the moment's feeling which is not even an object, and on the other side from that part of our whole object to which we attend. We have next (*b*) this real object of attention with all its internal detail. And we have last (*c*) the nominal object. The nominal object is that part of the detail, or that aspect of the whole process, which for some cause we select and call the object of attention. And there is a tendency here to confuse, and to put this nominal object, this mere fragment preferred mainly for the sake of convenience, in the place of attention's real and entire object. And from this origin rises a whole train of more or less disastrous mistakes.<sup>1</sup> I will proceed to explain and to enlarge on this statement.

<sup>1</sup> The metaphor of the visual field and focus, which in Wundt and his followers appears as a doctrine, has, I venture to think, in its results been decidedly mischievous. The metaphor appears in Lotze's *Med. Psych.*, p. 505, and I should presume that Wundt owes the doctrine to Fortlage's *Psychologie*, but he himself is, I suppose, responsible for its prevalence so far as it has prevailed.

The 'object of attention', far removed from being a term clear and precise, is, as we have seen, a phrase full of ambiguity. But in too much psychology, as in common life, this phrase is used with no regard for its uncertain meaning. The 'object' of attention is in this respect like the 'subject' of a judgement. In a judgement the nominal subject may be something very different from that about which the assertion really is made, and the logician who fails to see this and to remember it will not avoid error. I will point out at some length this ambiguous character of attention's object. If we take such an instance as the pursuit of prey by a man or a beast, the real object of attention is not the mere animal pursued but the whole pursuit of that animal. And hence every detail in the scene which in any way bears on this pursuit, whether as contributing to it or as hindering it, is or may be included within the real object attended to. Or let us take the instance where a woman's object in going to some party is in fact to promote the success of her daughter. We might say here naturally that, apart from oscillation and failure, her daughter was throughout the time the real object of her attention. But this way of speaking, if convenient, is not correct. Her true 'real object' is the observing, the doing, and the preventing this and that thing with regard to her daughter, and, we must add, in a certain interest. And hence it is hard to say what detail in the scene may as a condition or circumstance fail to be included in the object which she pursues—to be attended to and to be contained in her attention's real object. And it is from this point of view that we must understand also the *diversion* of attention, for diversion once more is an ambiguous phrase. When we say that something occurs to attract the mother's attention to something other than her daughter, our meaning is doubtful. We may mean first that, for a longer or shorter period or periods of time, she does not think at all about her daughter or in any way notice her. And if so, during those periods her attention to her daughter has ceased, except in an improper sense to be noticed below. But on the other hand our meaning when we speak of diversion

may be widely different. For the new pursuit and the old one may be co-ordinated in various ways into one whole object. And in this case the diversion of my attention from A will not imply that I cease to attend to A *because* I now attend to B. For I may attend at once to both B and A as coexisting adjectives in one pursuit or scene, or I may subordinate B to A in various ways as a more or less accidental detail, circumstance, or condition. The question is here not of 'Yes or No' and of 'Either one or the other'; the question is really about both, and it concerns the degree in which each is present, and again the relative position in which the one stands to the other. The diversion of attention, in short, takes place here within the attention itself. And hence the division and the diversion of attention are phrases, the meaning of which can never anywhere be assumed as known. The meaning will vary in different cases and it will vary perhaps vitally, and it must be investigated for each purpose in hand before conclusions are drawn. And I doubt whether even with the regenerate man of the psychological laboratory this necessary investigation has always taken place. The object of attention, even where our attention is concentrated, is not that aspect of it which for convenience we may abstract and may entitle the object. The real object is on the contrary always a process with this 'object'. It is a more or less systematic whole of action and scene in which the nominal object may be more or less reduced to a detail or condition. That which, for example, Mr. Shand has called the 'set of the interest' (*M. n.s.* iii. 454) is really an integral part of the attention's object, and this may be true again of the whole present scene with its background and environment. When I attend to the decay and to the disappearance of a sensation, this mere sensation is not the real object to which I attend. And the fact that I observe the cessation surely proves that any such view is erroneous. The object which I really observe is the sensation in its relation perhaps to a certain special system or scale, and at least in its more general connexion with a wider order and scene. And if we forget this, then, as we saw above with regard to the

question of intensity, our inquiry may be ambiguous and our conclusions may be vitiated beforehand. In short between the real and the nominal object of attention the divergence may be vital. Our real object (as we saw) may even consist in the negation of what we call our object. I may thus be said to attend to a thought which persecutes me, while I really attend to the extruding of this thought from my mind. My object here is the process of extrusion together with all that this process implies. But I, taking into view the thing on which I am to act, for convenience call this my object, and I thus am led into error both in theory and practice. My real object, the process of extruding A, is a negation which, like all negation, involves a positive basis, and A itself is a detail which has no right to appear except as a condition thus positively negated. And if this essential subordination is for a moment wanting, and if A for one moment is set free, my object and my attention have at once been changed surreptitiously and radically. There are probably few of us who in practice have no acquaintance with this error. We have resolved to attend to the not thinking of something which tempts us. Our resolve here, if genuine, and our true object, is to drive out this idea when it occurs, and to do this by keeping our minds fixed on that which will extrude it. And the Devil, when he knows his business, induces us by some pretext to keep the temptation before us. He suggests that it is even our duty always to bear this temptation in mind, of course always qualified by the idea that it is a thing which we reject. And thus the idea naturally, by being held before us, tends to free itself at least in part from its mere subordinate phase, and so in the end acts positively and independently. And our object and our attention have in this way been essentially transformed. We may note again the same natural transformation in the case of repentance. The repentance, we may say, that allows itself ever to think of the past deserves to be suspected. And repentance, we might even add, is a luxury permitted only to those who are morally rich.

The bearing of this whole question is so wide and its



importance is so great<sup>1</sup> that I will ask the reader to delay and to consider carefully a further instance. And I will take this instance from Mr. Shand's article in *Mind*, N.S. iii. 457. We can, of course, attend to a pleasure or a pain and make it our 'object'. But the effect of our attention upon this object may vary indefinitely and may go to strengthen it or again to expel or to weaken it. And hence, if in each case we assume that our object is the same, we seem landed in a difficulty. But the real object, as we have seen, is in each case not the same but different, and to attend actively to a *mere* sensation or to a *mere* pain is in no case possible. The sensation or the pain or the pleasure never is and never could be the entire and real object. It is but one feature in that larger object to which I really attend and which in each several case may differ widely. Thus with pain my true object may be the means which I use to remove it, or I might possibly attend to the dwelling on my self as a sufferer from this pain, indignant or unresisting or calmly resigned. My object and my attention in each of these cases is something different, and, if the effects vary, that result is surely natural. Again I may attend to a present pain not as to a thing by which I now am perturbed, but as to a fact in which I take theoretical interest. I may wish to observe this pain as a given psychical phenomenon, or I may wish to view it in its wider bearings either as this pain or more generally, and in either case as an element in the moral world or in the Universe at large. The object even of such theoretical attention will not be the same in each case. And even here the effects may be more or less diverse, but the *general* tendency is here, we may say, to subordinate the pain as now felt and so to weaken it. From this I may go on to attend in a different way. I may fix my mind on the pain as a thing which

<sup>1</sup> In the end it takes us back to the question of the true essence of negation, and I think that wrong views as to this have in certain points injured psychology. The possibility of a negative will and the real nature of aversion are points to be discussed in a future article. For the second of these see *M.* xiii. 21 [*E.* xiv. 268-9]. The doctrine of our text will be shown in another article to have vital importance also with regard to the question of mental conflict and of imputation.

should not be attended to except with contempt. Here my real object is the practical degradation or extrusion of the pain, and this negative process involves a positive object and a positive volition. My aim is to carry out that idea of my self which satisfies me and of which I approve, and such an object implies the negation of the pain. But there is, I think, no occasion to enlarge and to dwell further on this instance. Enough has been said to make clear the essential ambiguity of the 'object'. There is in brief never any presumption that what we are disposed to call attention's object is the real object of attention; and that real object may even on the contrary consist in the positive suppression of the nominal object. Hence every inquiry must begin with this preliminary question:—What in the case before us really is contained in the true object of attention?

I will now briefly touch on a point which I have noticed already, the meaning which should be given to a 'permanent attention'. We should all say naturally that perhaps for weeks we have been attending to something, and it is of course obvious that through all this time we cannot actually have attended. And in the same way we 'keep watch' where through all the time we have not been actually watching.<sup>1</sup> We mean, I presume, that we have had throughout a constant will to observe, and the sense to be given to a constant or permanent will can be best discussed further in a later article. But here as elsewhere, whenever we speak of attending, we mean a special attention with regard to a certain particular purpose. And if through any period our amount of actual attention has been sufficient for that purpose, we naturally express this by asserting that through all the time our attention has been there. It

<sup>1</sup> See here Professor James, *Psychology*, i. 420. There is no doubt that sustained active attention generally means a succession of willed acts, but it is not clear what are the limits of such an act. There must be an idea which realizes itself, and, when that is over, the act is over until again we have an idea, either the same or another. But suppose, e.g., I have willed to occupy myself with a subject and the occupation goes on, at what point does that occupation cease to be the realization of my idea and so to be my act?

has not really been there, but what has happened has been this. The idea of carrying out the proposed end has been associated with my inner and outer worlds in such a manner that, given the occurrence of any change sufficiently connected with this idea, my actual attention to the means will at once be aroused. And thus by a licence our attention is said to have been present throughout, since it has been present conditionally. And it has been actually present so far as our end and purpose requires, and everywhere the necessary amount of attention is and must be measured by the purpose and the end.

From this I will go on to offer a few remarks about the fixation of attention. If we remember that active attention involves will, and that will is the self-realization of an idea, we can at once reply generally to the question how attention is fixed. Active attention is fixed always by the idea of an end. The idea, we have seen, may be the idea of an activity which is no more than theoretical, but in some form the idea of an end is essential. Wherever it is absent, there at least for the time we are without active attention. We may be in a sense occupied and engrossed, we may be in such a state that whenever we deviate we are brought back, and hence, as we have just explained, attention is present in such a state conditionally. But, apart from an idea which realizes itself, we are not actively and in the proper sense attending. We may say, then, that always and in principle attention, in the sense of active attention, is fixed by an idea. And if we endeavour to pass behind this idea to a more fundamental attention, we are led either to a fresh and more remote idea, or to something which certainly is not active attention and will. We may doubtless ask a further question as to how ideas themselves become fixed, and this question is doubtless as important as it is wide and difficult. But I do not think that such a problem falls within the limited scope of this article, and at any rate it is impossible to deal with it here. A question which involves difficulties such as would be raised, for instance, by any discussion of what are called 'fixed ideas', deserves to be treated with some respect.

How and under what laws the idea acts in attention is again a question which I cannot attempt here to answer. Without entering on this I will briefly notice our employment of outward objects. As a help to concentration on an abstract problem we are used to gaze on something prominent in our field of vision and so to anchor our thoughts. This familiar process has two sides. It is in part negative and serves to inhibit distracting sensations and movements, but in the main and in principle it is positive. The outward object has itself now become part of the content of an idea, the idea of myself pursuing a certain end. And hence the object itself now on occasion re-suggests the pursuit and so resists deviation.<sup>1</sup>

I will conclude with some observations on a point which bears on the foregoing, the connexion between attention and what is called 'conation'. We have here again a term which is dangerously ambiguous.<sup>2</sup> Conation may be used for something which is either not experienced at all, or at least is not at all experienced as conation. But, passing by these senses, I should deny that conation is involved in attention, unless conation is used merely as a general head which includes volition. If it were used more narrowly and taken to imply an experienced effort or striving, we could not truly say that all volition and attention contain it. Attention, being will, must involve an opposition between existence and idea, but I cannot agree that this opposition must entail an effort and struggle. The resistance of the fact may be no more than what comes from inertia, and to remove it actually may cost little more than to anticipate its removal ideally. And if the alteration of existence implies always a struggle, I at least can often neither perceive this nor feel it. And hence I could not admit that, used in this emphatic sense, conation belongs to all active attention.

<sup>1</sup> On the unmeaning movements made in attention see Professor James, *Psychology*, i. 458. He however omits to notice that, beside 'drafting off', these movements, if monotonous, may fix positively. A movement with one character may serve as a fixed object. How far, if at all, without a fixed external world any attention and any self-control would in the end be possible, is an interesting question on which here I of course do not touch.

<sup>2</sup> With regard to conation I may refer the reader to *M. n.s. x* [*E. xxiii*].

It is true (to pass from this point which is of little importance) that our attention corresponds on the whole to our permanent interests. Our attention may be said to answer in the main to the felt wants and the unfelt needs of our nature and to conduce to their satisfaction. But to turn this broad correspondence into an essential unity, or even into a necessary connexion, is indefensible. It is an attempt to force a construction on the facts, against which the facts, unless we close our eyes, most evidently rebel. Thus to identify every 'disposition' with an actual conation is plainly unjustifiable, so long as we use conation for that which is experienced and of which we are aware. And if on the other hand we take it as something either not experienced at all as conation, or at all events not so experienced by that consciousness of which we speak, we should at least make clear what it is that we do and that we do not assert. But if, apart from such hypotheses, we go by the facts, one conclusion becomes plain. We may will and may attend actively because we have first been compelled to 'attend' passively, because, that is, we have been somehow impressed and laid hold of by an idea.<sup>1</sup> And if attention is used in this improper sense, we often will because we have attended, and do not attend in the least because we will. If one follows the known facts one must admit the existence of volition, where the idea realizes itself quite apart from any antecedent desire or conation, and where these have not even contributed to the origin and suggestion of the idea. We may end in such cases, and we probably do end, by attending actively to the idea; but we may do this because, and only because, the idea has laid hold of us passively. Thus our will to realize this idea in external action and in inward knowledge is but the self-realization of the idea which so has possessed us. And you cannot, if you keep to facts, maintain even that the suggestion holds us in all cases because it arouses desire or even pleasure. For in some cases these both are absent, at least from the known facts, while in other cases we may find even the

<sup>1</sup> 'Idea' here includes any suggestion even when coming straight from a perception.

presence of their opposite. In short the attempt to get rid of ideomotor action, or to deny that at least some ideomotor actions are volitions, is founded on error and leads to a conflict with fact.<sup>1</sup> The suggested idea which moves us does not, to repeat this, always move us because in any sense it corresponds to an actual conation, if, that is, conation means something which we know and experience. This idea may come from an association, or it may arise from some kind of external or at least sensational emphasis, or we may be unable in any way to assign to it a psychical origin. There are cases where all that we are aware of is that the idea somehow is there, and that in itself it does not please us nor do we desire its fulfilment. But the idea remaining there, and because it remains there, becomes insistent and goes on to realize itself, and in this way unfeeling forces, we may say, our will and our active attention.

If it is urged that we have a general disposition to realize all our ideas, I have no wish to gainsay this. I am not, however, prepared to agree that such a disposition is ultimate, and in any case the assertion that it essentially depends upon pleasure or pain, or essentially answers to a conation, I must once more repeat, seems really contrary to plain fact. You may add again, if you please, that, without some special disposition in each case, no idea could hold and possess us. And once more, if you will not in every case assert the necessary presence of pleasure or pain, or of conation or desire, I am ready to accept and even to endorse this doctrine. But in some cases I must insist that this disposition is but physical, physical I do not say entirely but for the most part and in the main.<sup>2</sup> If you are true to facts, and if you keep to that individual soul with which alone you are here concerned, you cannot in all cases take the disposition as psychical. But to suppose that, with

<sup>1</sup> I hope to show this at length in a future article.

<sup>2</sup> What I mean is this, that, however right you may be in saying that for psychology a certain disposition is merely physical, you will never be right in asserting that its psychical result comes merely from it, and that psychical conditions have contributed nothing to that result.

a physical or with even a psychical disposition, a step has been made towards refuting the doctrine which we have advanced would in my opinion be most mistaken. It is a subject which, however, cannot be further pursued in the present article.

## ON MENTAL CONFLICT AND IMPUTATION

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THE purpose of this article is very limited. It proposes to deal to a certain extent with the subject of divided will, the conflict in the mind of ideas generally, and specially of the ideas in desire and impulse. It will inquire into the alleged facts of action contrary to will with special reference to the general nature of volition. And its aim will be to point out the principles on which in practice we impute actions to our selves or again disown them. I have for some time desired to write this article, in order, while trying to throw further light on its subject, to defend and in part to supplement the account of Will which I gave in *Mind*, xiii [*E.* xiv]. And I was led to desire this largely in consequence of a very interesting 'Study in Involuntary Action' by Mr. Shand.<sup>1</sup> The proper course doubtless would be to treat systematically the whole topic of desire and volition, but that course (if I could follow it anywhere) is not possible here. Any paper of the present kind must at least endeavour to speak for itself, however narrow its limits, but I hope that it may find support in other articles that have preceded and will follow.

Volition I take to be the realization of itself by an idea, an idea (it is better to add) with which the self here and now is identified,<sup>2</sup> or it is will where an idea, with

<sup>1</sup> In *M.* N.S. iv. 450-71. Compare other articles by the same writer in *M.* N.S. iii. 449-73, and N.S. vi. 289-325, and one by Dr. Stout in N.S. v. 354-66. I perhaps may be permitted to say that I at the time wrote a brief reply to Mr. Shand's criticism. An unfortunate accident, however, prevented this from appearing at the proper moment, and so I thought it better to wait, not foreseeing the length of the delay. I have also made use in this paper of Dr. Stout's article, though I cannot assent to his definition of will. Compare also his *Analytic Psychology* and his *Manual*.

<sup>2</sup> In *M.* O.S. xiii [*E.* xiv] I left out this addition, not because I did not hold the doctrine, but because, having to treat a very large subject in a very small space, I tried, rightly or wrongly, to simplify the matter. The meaning of the phrase will be discussed in a later article.



which the self feels itself one, makes its own content to exist.

I hope on another occasion to explain this thesis more fully,<sup>1</sup> but I set it down here as that which the present discussion will in the main support and defend. I have not forgotten that Mr. Shand has written, 'It will be difficult for any one who has reflected on the type of abortive volition in involuntary actions to any longer maintain that the realization of the idea is essential to volition' (*M.* n.s. vi. 291). In fact, I may say that the study of his interesting papers has done a good deal to confirm me in my view. The one defensible account of will (I must hold) is that which makes it consist in the self-realization of an idea, and I cannot, even with Mr. Shand's help, perceive that a serious objection to this doctrine can be based on anything in those actions which he terms 'involuntary'.

I will at once proceed to state the objection urged against will being essentially the realization of an idea, the objection, that is, which Mr. Shand would base on the facts as he apprehends them. I will then try to show that, even when the facts are so taken, the objection will not hold good, and I will point out the falsity of that assumption which underlies it. I will then deal briefly with the nature of mental conflict and of action contrary to volition. And I will end by asking how the result gained will bear on imputation. But by imputation we are here to understand the mere fact that we accept or disown certain actions, and I shall not inquire if in thus disowning or accepting them we are morally right.

Will, we are told by the objection, cannot consist in the realization of an idea, since there are facts which are inconsistent with such a definition. And the fact, which we are here concerned with, is the alleged instance of action which realizes an idea but is contrary to will.<sup>2</sup> There may

<sup>1</sup> I may, however, in the meantime, refer the reader to *M.* o.s. xiii [*E.* xiv] and again to *M.* n.s. x and xi [*E.* xxiii and xxiv].

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Shand proposes to call this by the name of 'involuntary action'. I do not myself see how we can fix the sense of 'involuntary' as 'contravoluntary', when the term has a wider meaning which is so well established.

be two ideas present, it is said, at once to the mind, two ideas which move us towards two incompatible actions, and which, so moving us, conflict with one another. Each of these ideas, it is added, is felt as mine, and is identified equally with myself. And we may take as an example the morbid desire for drink in collision with the effort after duty. When in the result an action comes in either direction, then by the definition either action alike should be will. But under at least some conditions when we have drunk we insist that we have not willed, but that our real will has been overpowered by the morbid idea. Hence the difference which constitutes the essence of will does not (it is objected) lie in an idea identified with the self. The difference must lie elsewhere, and Mr. Shand would appear to find it in an inexplicable Will.

Now I do not accept the above description of the facts as correct, for I cannot admit without very serious qualification the simultaneous presence of each idea. But before entering on this matter I desire to lay stress on another point. Even if it were true that the self is identified at once with two conflicting ideas, the self need still not be identified with them alike and equally. There may be a difference here which will amount to a distinction and to an alternative between Yes and No; and this difference will be a reason for our attributing the result of one idea to ourselves and for our disavowal of the other. To this aspect of the case Mr. Shand, I think, has not done justice. The difference here of higher and of lower, with the possible consequence of an alternative between will and no-will, is very far from consisting in the presence or absence of mere morality. A highly immoral act may in a sense be an act which is higher, and it may come in an eminent degree from my self and my will. And, in short, it is necessary to enter into an examination of the whole question from this side. We must ask in the case of ideas

I fear that the result of such a struggle against language must be confusion, and I cannot perceive that the struggle is necessary. I should add that I do not forget that Mr. Shand rests his case against the above definition of will on other grounds also. I shall deal with these on another occasion.

which move us, and again in the case of mental states generally, in what way one of these is higher and more mine than another. All of them are 'mine', we are agreed, but there may be a special sense or senses in which they can be distinguished also as more and less 'mine', and can even be distinguished as 'mine' and 'not-mine'.

1. We all recognize the distinction between on the one side our true self, or our self taken as a whole, and on the other side a lower and chance self of some moment. There is a central group and order of certain feelings, ideas, and dispositions, which we should call essential to our selves. And hence, when we fail to act in accordance with certain habits, interests, and principles, or even act in a way opposed to them, the self that is realized is felt to be accidental and other than our true self. This is all so familiar that it would be superfluous to dwell on it, and taking it for granted I will pass on to insist on a further point. This distinction does not rest on the interference of an inexplicable something which is called the 'Will'. For it holds, in the first place, obviously between one volition and another<sup>1</sup> as well as between volition and other aspects of our nature. And, in the second place, it holds in cases where no volition at all is present. And a distinction applicable between volitions, and applicable also neither solely nor specially to volitions, cannot reasonably, I submit, be based on an empty 'Will'. 'I was not myself when I could act in such a manner', 'I was not myself when I could so think of you', 'I do not feel myself at all to-day', 'It was not like him to make that stupid mistake'—we have here some ordinary examples. We do not find in all of these cases the presence of volition, but we find in every case alike the false or the chance self in opposition to the genuine self. I, in short, fail to see how volition can here be

<sup>1</sup> If the Will were taken as something known and possessed of a known character, then, of course, volitions could have more or less of this character, and so be distinguished among themselves. But if this same character were found also to exist in every part of our nature, there would be so far no reason for ascribing it to the Will. I am, however, in the text, speaking of a Will which, itself unknown, interferes from the outside.

specially concerned, since the same opposition seems on the contrary to prevail through every part of our being.

'But', it may be objected, 'this distinction after all is but an affair of more and less. Outside of morality we may have perhaps a self which is higher or lower, but we never find a self which is really mine against a self which is not-mine, and which stands on one side of the chasm which divides Yes from No.' An objection of this kind is common everywhere, but it seems really one-sided and superficial. Everywhere a difference in degree may amount to a distinction in kind. Everywhere, when you compare things with a view to some end, and so measure them by some standard, 'more' and 'less' may be opposed as what is right and is not-right. And in the narrow sense of 'moral' these distinctions are not all moral, and they are not confined to the moral world. Wherever in theory or practice one particular course must be taken, it seems even obvious that the course chosen, because it is better, will become for that reason the one course which is not bad. I am not at present raising any question with regard to imputation, and I do not say that everywhere the worse course, if taken, would be disowned by myself. This is a further question with which at present we are not concerned. What I wish to point out here is that everywhere and through all regions of our nature we find a distinction between the self which is, we may say, essential and the self which is accidental. And this distinction, however much it rests upon difference in degree, can and does come before us as a difference in kind between mine and not-mine.

It is the concrete matter and substance of our selves with which we have been so far concerned. And hence the distinction, so far as it has at present been drawn, may, if we please, be called *material*.

2. I pass from this to consider other ways of distinguishing higher from lower and mine from not-mine. There are several of these which in comparison with the foregoing may, if we please, be called *formal*. Everywhere the more universal, we may say, is the higher and more mine,

and it is on this principle that all our formal distinctions rest. But it was really this same principle which was involved above in our 'material' distinction. For, since our self is in its essence a system and concrete universal, the more general and the more material will in the end be identical. The higher, because it is higher, will for that reason be wider, and it will also be lower in the sense of being more deep-rooted and fundamental. But, though at bottom the same, these principles may diverge in practice and may even be opposed. The more general may often be only more abstract, and the increase in abstraction may be at the price of greater onesidedness and emptiness. Hence the higher will here be higher in one respect only, while viewed from another side it may be lower and worse. It is, in a word, but higher formally. On the other hand, that which is less abstract may often be really more universal. For it may extend far more widely, it may represent more of the whole, and, containing a greater amount of the essential matter, may so in the best sense be more material. But this opposition, we must remember, is not absolute, and whatever is higher materially would, if it became explicit, be higher also formally. On the other side, in practice there is a relative division and a divergence of two principles. And hence I will go on to point out some varieties of what may be called formal superiority. There are real differences between these, but the differences all come from one ground.

(a) In theory and practice alike a course will be formally higher when it explicitly and consciously asserts a principle instead of embodying it unconsciously. It is a higher thing, we may say, to act, knowing why we act, than it is to act simply. On the other hand, if you compare two actions while taking them as wholes, that which is conscious of no principle may, of course, really be the higher. For the principle asserted formally by the other action may be defective and narrow. In other words to act with a reason is, so far as it goes, higher than to act without one, but in any particular case the man who can give no reason may have more reason on his side. We know the one-

sided theorists who always go upon a principle, and who usually go wrong, because their principle is too abstract or (it comes to the same thing) is too narrow. And on the practical side the same defect is familiar. When, to take an extreme case, I protest that 'I do not care what the thing is, I will do it because I have said so and because I choose'—such a course is in one sense extremely high. I am appealing to the idea of the self which is a law to itself and is a principle superior to anything in particular. On the other hand, I am applying this principle not as an individual system and whole, but as an empty abstraction. The connexion therefore between my principle and the particular act is accidental and external, and is perhaps supplied by the meanest and narrowest caprice. Still, if you consider it formally, my act is really higher and is more mine, than if without consciousness of any principle I had acted rightly. In the end there will be no divergence between what is best materially and best formally, but in any given case an opposition between the two may arise. And we must admit that to be conscious of a principle is, so far as it goes, a genuine superiority.

(b) I will pass on to another kind of superiority which also is formal, and which exhibits the same principle in a different application. We know, both in theory and practice, what it is to adopt a course at once and unreflectingly, and what it is, on the other hand, first to pause and then to say, 'Yes, I will take it.' I am not referring to the instances where incompatible suggestions leave us paralysed, and where, after oscillation or forgetfulness, one of these suggestions returns and determines our action. I am speaking of cases where we do not merely pause, but where we pause and reflect. We have a special end which is strong enough to prevent action until some course has been mentally qualified as its means. Or from the mere habit or, again, the idea and conscious principle of waiting, in the presence of a difficulty, until we have seen the thing from all sides—we in the presence of some suggestion or suggestions repress and suspend action. The suggestion or suggestions, whether in theory or practice, are, we may

say, negated; they are for the moment alienated from my self and made into objects. This does not, of course, mean that they cease altogether to be felt, but it means that, in becoming objects and in being held before me, they tend so far to be felt less, and are kept in check by a principle with which the self is identified. These facts are so important that it is better to recognize them, even while ascribing them to a faculty or a miracle, than it is to ignore them altogether; but I cannot perceive that we are driven to a choice between such alternatives. In the earlier stages of the mind there is, of course, no reflection at all. Ideas which conflict in our minds leave us helpless and a prey to various kinds of oscillation. It is later, when possessed by some idea which we are unable to realize, that we make the means to this end, and again what opposes it, into the objects of our thought. And as the end becomes more generalized, and, we may say, pushed further back by conflict and competition among its details, the end naturally will come to hold under it a number of alternatives. And these alternatives are by the agency of this end, with which our self is identified, brought before us as objects. In this way arises the habit and the principle of suspending action in the presence of difficulty or doubt, and of considering the possible courses. But it is still and always that higher end, under which the alternatives fall, which is the fixed and active principle. It is the identification of my self with this higher principle, whether in unconscious habit or conscious idea, which checks the suggestions<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I use the plural because I presume that, under normal conditions, if a suggestion in theory or practice really were and remained single, and strong enough to overcome what may be called my *psychical inertia*, I should certainly follow it. What restrains me is the presence in some sense of an alternative, and the only question is as to how general or how special this alternative is, and again at what point it is brought to consciousness. In connexion with the doctrine of the text I would advert to the phrase 'to collect oneself'. My self is dispersed by being identified with conflicting suggestions and scattered in their disorderly struggle. It is collected when the various incompatible courses are taken all alike as *not* the end, and as inferior to the end, but at the same time as possible means to the end. It is this which at once both negates and subordinates the suggestions, and, while checking their independent action, retains them as objects. And it is

and neutralizes them, while keeping them as objects before me and in a sense apart from me. And it is because my self is on the one side identified with this principle of a higher self, that a suggestion can be felt by it as on the other side embodying the lower self of the moment. And here in these cases we find the source of my felt constraint and self-alienation, and here is once more the reason of a further experience. When after reflection's pause a suggested course coalesces with the idea of my higher self, or at least ceases to arouse the opposition of a principle higher than itself, that course becomes, as we say, adopted. My self, before which the suggestion was held as something alien and incompatible, now feels itself one with the suggestion, and experiences that as its own self-assertion and development. Hence the process of the idea comes to me now as my truth or again as my reality that is to be. And it is because the possible alternatives have one and all been previously negated and so separated from my self, that my self is now free to discharge its collected and undivided energy in this single direction. And the coalescing of the self with that suggested modification of itself, which was for a time held aloof, naturally brings with it the heightened experience of reunion after estrangement. Here is the origin of that 'electric thrill' which Professor James seems to find inexplicable by psychology, and, if I may say so, endeavours to exploit for a mistaken end.<sup>1</sup> But, without

by identifying myself with this central principle that I become collected, and confront the detail as my property.

<sup>1</sup> The great reputation which Professor James deservedly enjoys as a psychologist compels me somewhere to notice his doctrine of moral responsibility. But even that very sincere respect and admiration which I feel for his work in psychology does not, I am sorry to say, make it possible for me to speak of this doctrine respectfully. When in the presence of two alternatives (so Professor James informs us), one of which is remote and ideal, while the other presses on me with sensational urgency, I will the former with an effort—this is something unaccountable. It is, among other things, an action in the line of the greatest resistance. It is also the real essence of volition, and, being an affair of the purest chance, it is a conclusive instance of Free Will. And the fact that when I am tempted there is absolutely no reason why I will one thing and not the other—this fact, Professor James assures us, is a pledge that morality is not an illusion. But 'chance'



attempting here to dwell further on a large and interesting topic, we may pass to our conclusion. In theory and in

appears with Professor James to have several senses. In his *Will to Believe* (p. 155) it is said to mean that under absolutely identical conditions the same result need not follow. This is, as I understand it, really to contend that the same A is at once and in precisely the same sense both B and not-B, a contention which obviously would destroy and remove the whole notion of truth. Every one who anywhere desires to ask and to speak about the true and the false, must begin by postulating in effect that any such contention is absurd. And even in the *Will to Believe* I find indications that such an undiluted absurdity is not what really is offered. There are signs, I think, that what Professor James actually means is that the two cases really do differ, but that, not perceiving in what without prejudice to his conclusion such a difference could consist, he has been led to deny its existence. There appears to me to be at any rate a very serious confusion in his *Psychology*. Professor James there states the alternative as being between Free Will and Determinism, so that whatever is not Determinism is *ipso facto* Free Will. He then seems to define Determinism as the doctrine which holds that the duration and the intensity of any effort, which we put forth, are 'fixed functions of the object' (ii. 571) or 'mathematically fixed functions of the ideas' before our minds (574). And any other doctrine but this (so I understand) is defined as Free Will. This is to say that in volition you are ordered to strike out (a) the influence of what is actually in the mind though not before it, and (b) the influence of everything in the shape of a disposition whether natural or acquired. You are to accept this mutilated view, which, not only in the case of volition but throughout psychology, you probably consider to be quite untenable—or else, according to the sense in which I am forced to understand Professor James, you are compelled to embrace the alternative of pure chance. And the only comment upon such an issue which I could offer would be this. I do not understand how any one with the abilities and knowledge possessed by Professor James could present such an issue to his readers, unless his mind were influenced by ideas extraneous to psychology. And when he himself appears to hold Determinism, as thus defined, to be for the most part satisfactory to himself, I can hardly suppose that I have rightly apprehended his meaning.

With regard to 'action in the line of greatest resistance', I will add a few words. We have here once again, as I understand it, the false alternative to a doctrine which itself is false, and the application to the soul of these mechanical doctrines is not likely to result on either side in anything satisfactory. The fact referred to, I presume, is this, that ideas and principles have not motive power in proportion to the amount of psychical perturbation which immediately corresponds to them. We therefore can choose the alternative which produces, and which we know will produce, most temporary trouble and unrest. But I am unable to perceive that this fact is in any way even abnormal—to say nothing of its supporting the worship of blind Chance. We find the same thing regularly in the world that is

practice alike a course that has been adopted after reflection will be so far superior. It will at least in one respect be a

merely intellectual. Where I refuse to adopt a principle of explanation which would make things easier in a particular case, if to do this would conflict with my more general principles—this is to follow (if you *must* say so) the line of greatest resistance. But for myself I must decline to adopt metaphors which seem to me to be false and misleading (cf. here Dr. Stout, *M. n.s. v.* 354–66, and *Manual*, p. 596).

About the claim to base moral responsibility upon mere chance, and to make it literally an affair of sheer accident, there is but little to be said. And, again, whatever seemed called for from me has been said now a long time ago. I must be allowed to express my opinion that apart from its theoretical absurdity such a claim is morally revolting, or would become so if it really could be seriously urged. Professor James, it is true, seeks to attenuate this paradox. He limits, as I understand, my moral responsibility, and makes it begin and end with those cases where I decide with an effort in the presence of temptation. It is only here, he urges, or seems to urge, that my conduct is really a matter of pure chance, and that I, in consequence, am a responsible agent and not 'the dull rattling of a chain, &c.' (i. 453). But, if I had to choose, I should myself prefer the unlimited absurdity; for that is more consistent, and I cannot see that it is any more absurd. And if I am asked how, if these doctrines are really what I think them, they can possibly come to be upheld, I must answer as follows. I am forced to believe that these results are not got by an unprejudiced inquiry made direct into the real claims of our actual moral nature. Wherever they are reached, they appear to be reached by reasoning downwards from alternatives now long ago argued to be vicious. They come from our looking at morality while one eye glances at theological dogma. They are got, I must be allowed to add, by our neglecting to ask ourselves whether in the end what we mean is anything positive. If, in the presence of his moral experience, a man objects to every form of Determinism which he finds offered him on the ground that none of these forms is adequate to the fact—such a man may be mistaken, but he most assuredly is so far not irrational, and I at least so far could not refuse him my respect and even my sympathy. But if, assuming first (and it is a great assumption) that some doctrine capable of satisfying us wholly in this matter is possible, any one goes on to set up that which he takes (perhaps without sufficient inquiry) to be the opposite of Determinism, and then asserts this opposite without so much as asking if, considered morally, it is itself even tolerable—it is impossible for me to treat any such conclusion with respect. And I have thought it better, even at the risk of giving offence, to express in plain language what I think and feel on this unfortunate subject. Such thoughts and feelings are not very exceptional, and I should like to make it more difficult for any one quite to ignore them. And since Professor James has himself, as I think rightly, expressed himself freely on this matter, I am the more inclined to hope that I have not been wrong in doing so likewise. It is really the high standard which elsewhere

higher expression of my true self. The reason of this is that such a course has been separated from union with my self as the mere self of here and now. And it has been brought, consciously or unconsciously, under the principle of the self that is above the detail of one moment, and is in the best sense universal. But this formal superiority, we must remember, may be one-sided. It may on the whole be consistent with and may even conduce to failure. The self that has risen above the particulars of the moment's detail may remain idly suspended and incapable of re-entering them with collected force. Or, if driven into action, this self may be driven in the end by external accident and chance caprice, and the result will in the end really not have come from or depend upon the inner principle. And it is another case of the same defect where, without morbid suspension, the principle has been taken too abstractly, for here once more there will be no vital connexion with the particular result. Still, in one respect and in general, an act adopted after reflection will be so far higher and more mine.

(c) From this I will go on to consider another variety of formal distinction. When we have before us A and B, the ideas of two incompatible courses, we may or we may not recognize these ideas as in the proper sense alternatives. If we so recognize them, then each is qualified for us by the negation of the other. When, in other words, we think of A, we think of it as A which excludes B, and in the same way we qualify B by the exclusion of A. And, taken thus as alternatives, A and B are so far placed on the same level, and you cannot say that one of them is formally superior to the other. But the case is different where A comes before us as qualified by the negation of B, but where on the he has kept before our eyes which has in a manner forced me to protest against what I cannot but regard as a dangerous lapse.

Nothing in the above remarks must, of course, be taken to apply to the theory of Pluralism as against Monism. It would certainly be quite incorrect to identify Pluralism with a doctrine of absolute chance, or with the claim that such an idea is the foundation of morality. On Professor James's doctrine of volition and consent I shall hope to comment in a future article.

other hand B is not actually thought of as excluding A. In this case B, however incompatible with A, does not come before us as containing the negation of A. And hence, taken formally, A and B are so far not on a level, since, as I think of them, while A embraces and subordinates B, B on the other hand does not contain any explicit negation of A. B is therefore, we may say, thought of as standing under and subject to A, while the subjection of A is not made any part of B's content. And A will therefore clearly so far be higher and will be so far more mine. It will be higher because it is wider and more inclusive, and is in this respect nearer to the idea of my true self as an individual and concrete whole. It is however scarcely necessary to point out that, here as before, a formal superiority may be barely formal, and may amount practically to nothing. But once again, so far as it goes, we are bound to recognize it. And trivial or trifling as this distinction perhaps may appear, we shall find that in its application it may possess great importance.

3. There remains a principle of distinction which, though connected with the foregoing, does not directly fall under them. An idea which is pleasant or more pleasant is so far higher and more mine, and an idea that is painful or more painful is, on the other hand, less mine and lower. In a given individual case this principle may of course prove one-sided and so far false, but still, as far as it goes, it will remain always true. And, taking the world as a whole, we have some reason to believe that any divergence between this principle and the foregoing principles is but local and relative. We make no assertions about the goodness or badness of pain and pleasure *per se*, and we leave that to the Hedonist and to others who insist on taking abstractions for realities. We find in fact that pain is connected with contradiction and defect, while pleasure on the other side goes with increase of being and with harmony. And if we are wise, we shall not seek forcibly to divide these aspects. We shall not attempt to derive the one of them from the other, or to make either of them in abstraction the absolute good. But, avoiding

this error, we may fairly say that the pleasant and the more pleasant are so far higher and more mine, while with pain the opposite is true. We might call this distinction material, on the ground that pleasure and pain are not forms, but are sensations or feelings. We might again, if we chose, insist that this distinction is but formal, since it to some extent varies independently of that which is material. But in my opinion we shall do better if we leave these terms alone. They are of little value anywhere, and used here they would probably even be mischievous.

I would, before proceeding, once more remind the reader that all these distinctions in degree may, under some conditions, amount to differences in kind. Everywhere that, which from one point of view is but more and less, becomes from another point of view right and wrong, and true and false, and mine and not-mine. The interval bridged by degrees becomes, in other words, the open chasm between Yes and No. And now, in view of the above distinctions, I would submit that, apart from mere morality, there may be differences between a higher and a lower self. To hold that, when my self is identified with ideas, these ideas must, outside of the moral sphere, all equally be mine is surely indefensible. We have found enough differences in the daylight, and have seen no need to invoke the darkness of an inexplicable Will.

I will pass on now to consider the actual facts of mental conflict and the struggle of ideas and desires to move me in opposite directions. And it will be convenient in this article to speak of these ideas throughout as being also desires, even where they really are not so.<sup>1</sup> It was, we

<sup>1</sup> The main difference here lies in the presence or absence of pleasure felt in the idea (see *M.* o s. xiii [E. xiv]). I shall in the present article take some account of this difference with regard to imputation, and I hope to touch on the general nature of desire in a future article. It will be understood, of course, that I recognize desire nowhere where an idea is not present. The general head for me is that of 'moving idea', and 'desire' I take to be but one kind that falls under this head. It is merely for the convenience of the reader that in this article I make the two coextensive, and I would beg him, in justice to me, to remember this.

saw, maintained that I could have before me at once two incompatibly moving ideas, and that my self could be at once identified with each of these ideas as actually present together. And it was added that, though either of these ideas might be realized in fact, we had not in each case alike with this the presence of volition. And from this a conclusion was drawn as to the nature of will. On the other side, the reader will remember, I have already urged that, even from the ground of these alleged facts, the conclusion does not follow. And I will now give my reasons for not accepting the facts as alleged. The subject is of course a very old matter for discussion, and it must always remain difficult on account of the number of questions which it involves.

What in the first place, let us ask, are incompatible ideas or desires? They are such as, being diverse, would qualify the same point incompatibly.<sup>1</sup> But when we have such incompatible ideas or desires, we need not know them to be incompatible. We may have them, and know that we have them, and yet may be unaware that they are contrary. And in the first and in the simplest case of such unawareness the ideas have never as yet collided. They come before us as one single complex of idea and desire. They are, in fact, but diverse elements contained in one desire and one idea, and within this whole they are so far simply together, and coupled, we may say, by a mere 'and'.<sup>2</sup>

But as soon as action begins, these elements naturally prove incompatible. In their movement towards reality our ideas collide, and the 'and', which joined them in harmony, at once disappears. In our attempt to act we either altogether fail to produce an action, or, if we succeed, we succeed but in part, and perhaps with painful results. And, led thus to pause and to consider, we may perceive that our desires interfere one with the other.

<sup>1</sup> This means in the end that they would, being diverse, simply qualify the same point (see *A.R.* Appendix, Note A, 500 = 562).

<sup>2</sup> For a full explanation of this I must refer the reader to a former article in this series, *M. n.s.* No. 41 [*E.* xxiv].

Hence they are known now to be incompatible, and can no longer come before us as mere positive elements in one whole. And on this (*a*) one desire and one idea, as being far stronger than the other, may simply extrude it. The weaker idea may once and for all be driven out as an idea, and the result, which it leaves behind it, may be inappreciable, or at least too weak to reinstate it. And in this case the conflict of desires, in the proper sense, is at an end. But (*b*), if for any reason the desires are more equally balanced, such an extrusion will not happen, and in its stead a process of ebb and flow and of oscillation may set in. The ideas are not yet qualified for our minds explicitly one by the negation of the other, but practically, as soon as either begins to occupy us, the other also appears and struggles to expel its opposite. Each for the moment succeeding is in its turn forthwith driven out by the other, for neither by itself, or again with the other, can content us. In this alternation when, for a time, one idea is excluded, then for that time the desire which corresponds is in the strict sense at an end. But an idea, thus expelled after fluctuation, cannot fail more or less to survive in its effects. A mass of excited feeling which was joined with it will remain behind, and this feeling will be incongruous with, and will struggle against, the other idea which, for a time, has prevailed. The dog who, desiring to eat the forbidden, has been rebuked by his master, may for the moment have ceased in the proper sense to desire it. The idea of eating has been driven out, but the felt flow of saliva, with other elements of excited feeling, will remain. There is hence a psychical group incongruous with the idea of ready obedience, and struggling to restore its own opposite idea. And in the case of aversion the same thing will naturally hold good. We may have overcome our aversion in the sense that the idea of escape or destruction is banished. But none the less, feelings and movements which correspond to that idea may survive, and to an extent greater or less may strive against the prevalence of the counter idea. We may take as an instance of this the resolve to swallow some nauseous drug. We, in short, have not here, in the

proper sense, the actual aversion or actual desire, but we still must be said to be averse or desirous.<sup>1</sup>

(c) What will be the end of this alternation of contrary desires? If the need for action is felt to be imminent, the chance pressure of some moment will force, we may say, accidentally one idea into reality. But, apart from this, the oscillation will tend normally to cease, as, from whatever cause, the excitement dies gradually down, and the ideas move us less strongly. We (i) may relapse into a state where we even forget the incompatibility and the conflict. And here, once again, we unite our opposite ideas and desires as elements in one positive whole, and simply re-join them by an 'and'. Or (ii) preserving some memory of their hostility, we may seek more or less unconsciously to reconcile them by an imagined harmony. We invent or we entertain the idea of some fancied situation, and, placed in this by a change or an addition of some element, our jarring fact undergoes an imaginary transformation, or at least tends, more or less unawares, to be ignored in a certain aspect. In this new complex, our contrary desires are both co-ordinated on equal terms, or again one of them becomes without negation in some way disregarded, or else taken as subordinate to and positively included in the other. Thus a man without conflict may desire both to remain in bed and to rise, because in some way his present does not come before him, altogether and without condition, as this 'now' that now is. Or, dreaming of how things might have been if he had married the woman that now is his neighbour's, he may succeed unrebuked by his conscience in desiring her sinfully. What is done here is to imagine, more or less consciously, that some condition is added or removed, with the result that the case is altered, and is really no longer the actual case in hand. And so for the moment the incompatibility, though in truth unremoved, is removed

<sup>1</sup> I hope to return to this whole subject. On the nature of aversion, I must, for the present, refer the reader to *M.* xiii. 21 [*E.* xiv. 268-9]. The ordinary doctrine on this head I still venture to think very seriously mistaken.



from the view, and the confused whole can be desired without collision.<sup>1</sup>

(d) We may, however, led by willing insight or driven by hard experience, have been brought to perceive that our two ideas A and B are really incompatible. And (i), in the first place, we may have qualified A by the idea of negating B, either in part or entirely, without at the same time qualifying B's content by the negation of A. B may be unable even to suggest itself as the exclusion of A, or, if so suggested, it may be unable to maintain itself as A's negative. On the other hand A, in its character of superiority to B, may perhaps be forgotten, but can never be consciously driven out or held in subordination by its opposite. And hence the conflict of desires is, under these conditions, at an end. For a desire in the proper sense is not present without an idea, and it is now impossible for the idea B to maintain itself in collision with A. B, in short, cannot as against A any longer appear as an independent idea. It can appear; but where A is present, it can appear only as held in subordination to A. It is so far, therefore, a mere element included now in A's content, and hence we must say that, as the idea B, it has so far ceased to exist. On the other hand, there may remain (as we have seen) a group of excited feelings and movements, which, if it could gain an independent expression, would be once more this desire and this idea of A's contrary. We may recall the instance of the dog, mastered but still hankering and licking his lips. So again in determinedly swallowing a nauseous drug there may be a struggle of hostile feelings and even movements. But so long as B,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here James, *Psychology*, ii. 565. With this mode of removing practical conflict we should, of course, compare the theoretical solution of contradiction by way of distinction and division. In connexion with the doctrine of the text I should add that I, of course, reject the doctrine according to which the real and the imaginary can for me be distinct without an actual difference in their contents. While, e.g., I feel cold, I can certainly imagine that I feel warm, but certainly not without, in doing so, more or less abstracting from the conditions of my here and now. The widespread error on this subject makes, wherever it exists, a rational doctrine of belief and judgement impossible.

the idea of rejection, is not allowed to appear except as that which is to be and shall be crushed, it is held down as included in and subject to A, and hence, though in a sense averse, we actually have not the aversion B. It is so again when we start on some painful errand with the desire, first of all, to return home and to bid farewell. If this idea B, which in an independent form would be in actual collision with our starting, is subordinated to that idea and appears but as a thing which under the conditions is excluded—we have again no conflict of ideas or, in the proper sense, of desires. We have at most a hindrance and a resistance of elements which, so long as they are prevented from taking a higher form, fall short of a conflicting desire.

But, before proceeding, I would advert to a common error. It is absurd in volition to talk about the prevalence of the stronger motive and idea, before at least we have tried to make ourselves aware of the ambiguity of these phrases. And even to inquire whether our action takes the line of the less or the greater resistance, is, I will venture to add, in principle irrational. It is to discuss a problem, which to say the least is not merely mechanical, with a mind biased and in part blinded by physical metaphors. The defeated idea may survive, we have seen, in a mass of feeling hostile to our action. And in this case the volition may be made difficult, and the available energy lessened. But, upon the other hand, the result of conflict may on the whole be quite different, and the resistance, we may fairly say, has gone to increase the positive force. It is after all the whole self, and not the mere balance of its contents, which is realized in the act. And in many cases the excitement of the struggle, and even the very survival of the sensations and pains that belonged once to the defeated idea, pass to the credit of the idea with which the self is finally identified. The intensest volition, we might almost maintain, is that which has naturally developed itself from the smallest balance in the greatest sum of collision. Facts such as these will be for ever ignored by the crude gospel of Necessity, and for ever perverted into a plea for miracle by the blind apostle of 'Free Will'. They will be recog-

nized as what they are by no one who has not rejected the prejudice on which both superstitions alike are based.

The idea B, though subordinated, as we saw, by its contrary A, may still be represented by a mental group which survives and struggles to restore it. And where decisive action is impossible, this group is a persistent source of constant danger to A. For, though B still may be unable to assert itself openly against A in the character of A's opposite, it may none the less, if for some moment its subordination by A is forgotten, assert itself independently and positively. And the result of this will naturally be a desire, and perhaps an act, contrary to A. We have already glanced at this perpetual origin of insidious self-deceit. It may be dangerous, even where you honestly disapprove, to dwell too insistently on disapproval. For the constant negation of B by A is in a sense after all the continual repetition of B. And B is an element which, though subordinated, is perhaps for ever struggling to break loose and to appear and act independently. And hence your supposed repetition of B's subjection may unawares have passed into the habitual toleration of its presence. You tend in effect to lapse into the holding of both ideas as positive, coupled with the mental proviso that the one is taken really as subjected to the other. And from this basis B may in the oblivion of some moment have gone on to become independent unconditionally, and, before you can take warning, may have suddenly realized itself in an act.<sup>1</sup>

(ii) But in the end A and B may become qualified explicitly each by the negation of the other. Each may possess so much mental support, whether direct or indirect, that we may have been forced or led to recognize them as equal and conflicting alternatives. The idea and the desire B will now explicitly include not-A in its content, while A is determined in like manner by the exclusion of B. And a question, we saw, was asked as to what will result when both of these opposites are present. But we must meet this question, for the present at least, by denying the fact which it assumes. These moving ideas A and B cannot, while

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here *E.* xxiv. 436.

really taken thus as alternative, be present together; and we are able to think this possible only because we really do not take them as opposites. We, for the moment, may merely ignore their reciprocal exclusion, or we more or less consciously may fancy some wider arrangement in which they cease to conflict. But while each appears simply and unconditionally as containing the negation of the other, I am confident that both practical ideas, as ideas, do not come before us at once. Apart from some compromise, in which they are more or less conditioned and modified, they cannot each at the same moment be identified with myself. One will banish the other, or they will oscillate in a wavering alternation. This process will be painful because of the excited group which supports each desire, a group which, itself unbanished and unsubjected, throughout struggles blindly yet insidiously, and moves to gain expression in an idea and a desire, and so to dominate in its turn. The pain of oscillation will indeed itself be a further motive for the self to terminate the conflict, and, where immediate action is not possible, to attempt at least to silence one claimant by a resolve. But each excited group, while it remains, will seek to recommence its struggle for a voice, and in the end for a despotism. On the other hand, as powers that openly assert themselves each as the opposite of the other, they cannot in this character both rise above ground and appear at once as possessors of the self.

We have been led to enter on an old and well-known problem, the question whether a man can knowingly and willingly do what is bad. It is possible, of course, to answer this question in the affirmative, and to explain the admitted fact rationally by the psychical weakness of one contrary (*E. vi*). But, if our foregoing conclusion was correct, such an answer will not wholly stand. We must deny the possibility of a volition where opposite ideas are present together, if it is true that these ideas cannot coexist where they actually are opposite. If 'bad' be taken explicitly as the contrary of 'good', and if both ideas are understood simply and unequivocally and without mediation and qualification, 'bad' and 'good' cannot coexist, nor can one of

them be realized as against the other. And in the practical problem before us the meanings of 'good' and 'bad' are clearly fixed as so opposite. Since all will must be directed upon existence here and now, and is not possible except as a change in and of that existence,<sup>1</sup> an act proposed to be done, whether good or bad, will be good or bad for me now and here. And the 'here' and 'now' will inevitably force these terms to conflict as alternatives. Hence, if our view is right, they will be unable, as practical, to appear both at once, and the assertion of bad against good must be pronounced impossible. We fail to see this because the opposition tends unconsciously to be modified. The bad will become perhaps merely bad for others or, again, for myself at another time and place, or it may come to mean no more than what in general the world would mistakenly call bad. And so understood, the bad has of course become compatible with the good. In the same way when a man exclaims 'Though I know it is bad, I still do not care', or where he even experiences an added and evil pleasure in opposing goodness, he is after all not really doing the bad as bad. He is pursuing still and he always must pursue his own good. The bad in general, or bad for others, or bad conditionally, is now subordinated to his positive good, and is included in that. Wherever the opposite ideas, in short, are seen to be opposite unconditionally, there may be oscillation or extrusion of one by the other, but the presence of both practical ideas at once is not possible in fact.<sup>2</sup> We may conclude, then, that if I acted knowingly for the bad, the bad must *ipso facto* have become good, and otherwise (we shall hereafter see) the act would certainly not be my volition.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I shall deal with this point in a later article [*E.* xxvi].

<sup>2</sup> I am, of course, following here, as every one must follow, Aristotle, but how far at the same time I may diverge from him I do not inquire. His 'incorrigible man', at least as commonly understood, seems certainly an impossible monster.

<sup>3</sup> For this latter consequence see below, pp. 467-8. The reader may object that the doctrine of the text refutes itself by proving too much. By the same reasoning, he may urge, it would be impossible also to will the good knowingly as against the bad, and with this we should be brought into

There is, however, a possible objection which I will briefly notice before we proceed. 'If', it may be said, 'you cannot have at once two alternative desires and ideas, surely this will mean that you are unable to think at all of any contrary alternatives, and such a doctrine, it is evident, you cannot maintain.' To this I reply (*a*) that to entertain theoretically and to think of incompatible ideas is, in the first place, not the same thing as to have two such ideas tending to realize themselves as existences in our mental being. It is not even the same thing as theoretically to predicate these ideas of what we call *our* reality. That which makes an idea theoretical will tend to prevent its further realization in existence. And that again which makes it a 'mere idea'—an idea, that is, which is not judged to be true of *our* world—will once more tend to separate it further from our psychical being. And the failure to perceive this is at once a common and most mischievous error. In the second place (*b*) when, without judging them to be true of our real world, we entertain the ideas of incompatibles and reflect on their nature, it is not the fact that, as we hold them before us, these ideas are wholly and barely incompatible. On the contrary, the idea of them as co-existing in this other world of mere thinking seriously collision with a large mass of fact. The answer is that, if the bad were present with the good as its independent opposite, in that case you certainly could not act for the good. But when the bad is not so present, but comes before you merely as negated by the good and as a subordinate element in that, the case is radically altered. You may reply, 'But then the same thing will hold with the bad. Where the good as an independent positive idea is absent, the good may on its side be merely subordinate to the bad.' Yes, but, I answer, you are now supposing what is downright impossible. The good, where I am conscious morally, cannot fail to be present as a positive idea. The good and the bad are certainly opposed, but none the less they do not stand on a level. The bad without the good would be nothing at all, but the good does not, except in a narrow and special sense, depend on the bad. The bad is, in short, essentially subordinate to the good. To call it a mere kind of goodness would certainly not be correct, but that would be far less false than to speak of good and bad as being two independent positive kinds. But I cannot, of course, enter into such a large subject here. We should be led once more to think of the self-contradiction inherent in the bad, and again to reflect on the absurdity of assuming that every idea has a legitimate contrary.

modifies their nature. Their transference to this other world removes the point of union through which in our world they conflict, and by a change of conditions it so far makes them actually compatible. And the thought that, if this condition were removed, A and B certainly would clash, is not the positive maintenance before us of A and B immovably in a state of clashing. It is rather the idea of the extrusion of their collision by and from the 'real' world into another world, where by a distinction this collision is prevented from taking place. With these too brief remarks I must pass from an important and wide-reaching subject.

We have now to some extent examined the facts of mental conflict and of what may be called divided will. We previously, as the reader may recall, laid down those principles on which one idea is judged by us to be higher and to be more mine than another. And we may now proceed to the question of imputation in connexion with the definition of will. But in speaking of imputation, I mean merely to consider the fact without inquiring how far it can be morally justified.

The results we have reached enable us to deal rapidly with the subject of action against will. We have seen that the alleged fact, as it was offered to us, does not really exist. If we use 'desire' in the proper sense in which it involves an idea, we cannot really have an actual conflict of opposite desires, and in the end we might insist that we cannot experience the presence of more than one desire at the same time. But apart from this we found at any rate that, while A not-*b* holds its place, we cannot have also the simple and unconditional appearance of B not-*a*. And, given two opposite ideas explicitly qualified as opposite, we certainly could not in fact go on to realize either in a volition. If, however, for the sake of argument we suppose that B (whether we take it as independent and merely positive or again as an independent B not-*a*) has actually realized itself in the presence of A not-*b*, that would be a case of volition. The act would be so far clearly my will, but for other reasons, we shall go on to see, I might probably

disown it as really mine. But I must repeat that I cannot myself admit any such case to be possible.<sup>1</sup>

I am far from denying that, while the idea of *A not-b* is held fast, *B* in spite of this can in a sense realize itself and pass into act. In the case of abnormal ideas we must allow that, in a sense, this can happen. But as soon as we consider the real sense in which it happens, we must deny that an act of this sort is a volition. The act would be a volition if *B* had broken loose from its subjection to *A*, and had come before us as itself positive and without any reference to *A*. But as long as *B* is held subordinate and does not appear except as negated by *A*, a different answer must be given. You cannot say that a subjected element contained within an idea is itself an idea proper. And since you, therefore, cannot assert that an idea has, in the proper sense, here realized itself, you, by the definition, are unable to affirm the presence of will. In such an act we no more have a volition than in an analogous case we should have a judgement. If, while mentally holding fast the idea *A not-b*, I were somehow to give utterance merely to *B*, that utterance would be no judgement nor the true expression of any idea really in my mind. And in the same way the escape into act of a subordinate element contained under an idea is not in the proper sense the realization of an idea, and it is so, by consequence, no volition.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reader must bear in mind that this case supposes that both ideas are held to the last clearly each in its own individual character. If that character becomes obscured or confused, then, whatever else happens, the idea *B* certainly will not have realized itself as against *A not-b*. If the two alternatives or incompatibles come in the act before the mind, as one inconsistent ideal whole, it is clear that such an idea as this is not the idea of either, and could not itself possibly pass into fact. The supposed case, in short, demands that each idea maintains its individuality and its relation to the other; and where and so far as these ideas work practically, I do not believe this maintenance to be possible.

<sup>2</sup> The same, I would repeat, must be said of the realization of one of the two struggling aspects of a self-discrepant ideal whole. That is not in any proper sense the realization of an idea, and it is, therefore, not will. In order for the volition of *B not-a* in the presence of *A not-b* to happen, what would be required would be the maintenance of each idea as at once distinct and as related to the other. And we have seen that for a theoretical purpose



Our conclusion, however, must be different if, as usually happens, there are opposing ideas which oscillate. In this case B for the moment may have broken loose from subordination to A, and may in its turn have subjected A to itself, or, as is more probable, for the moment B may simply have extruded A from the mind as an idea. Under these conditions, if B realizes itself in act, we have clearly got a volition, and I do not know why we should hesitate to assert this confidently. How far that volition may on other grounds be more or less disowned as mine, is again a further and a different question.

As long as we keep to theory and confine ourselves to that which is in general true, we can deal more or less satisfactorily, I believe, with any case that can be offered. It would be far otherwise if we attempted to lay down rules by which to settle particular cases in practice. We have already noticed a class of actions which, in theory not puzzling, would prove really intractable by any rules of art. There are cases, we saw, where the collision has been more or less unconsciously and surreptitiously removed. Neither of the opposite ideas has here been forgotten or openly extruded, but one or both of them has in some way been so qualified that they are conjoined together in one whole, and now coexist peaceably. The action that results cannot, of course, realize this inconsistent ideal whole, and the action, therefore, as failing at least in part to carry out its idea, will so far not be my will. If volition, it will be volition only to a certain extent, which will be different in each case.<sup>1</sup> But to know in each case what was actually in the mind of the agent, to find the degree of his illusion, and

these ideas can be so held before us. But the very condition which makes that possible is, so far as I see, removed *ipso facto* by the ideas becoming practical. In order to become practical they, in short, are forced in some way to change their character.

<sup>1</sup> The question would turn mainly, I presume, on the amount of connexion or disconnectedness between the elements of the ideal whole which is before the mind of the actor, and on what we are able to speak of there as one idea. We should also have to ask how far a volition can fail to realize itself and can yet remain a volition. This difficult question will be taken up in a later article [*E.* xxviii].

to estimate his responsibility, indirect and direct, both by way of commission and by way of negligence, is not a possible achievement. And to draw up rules for constructing such an estimate would at best be pedantry.

I will add another instance of this difficulty, mainly because it tends to illustrate the account which I have given of will. If I have the idea of another person as performing a certain act or as being in a certain condition, and if then the act or the condition really follows in me, this, to speak in general, would not be a case of volition. And we must say the same thing if I merely imagine myself as being in a certain psychical state, and if my imagination is thereupon realized in fact. The result will in neither case be volition, and it will probably fail of being so in two ways. The result in the first place may not have followed as a genuine consequence from my mental state, and, if so, it cannot be the self-realization of an idea. And, even if the result has so followed, it is still not a volition. For the idea of another's act, or the mere imagination of my own act, is obviously not that ideal content which the result has realized. For the idea in each case, as I held it, was modified by a condition which divided it from simple union with my self as existing here and now. And since this character is not and could not be carried out in the result, my actual idea has not been realized, and the result, therefore, is not will. That which has been carried out in act is no more than a partial aspect of my idea, and it therefore in the proper sense is itself no idea at all. On the other hand, if the qualification of my idea as alien or as imaginary for the moment lapses and falls out (and there is, of course, a tendency to this lapse), the case is altered essentially. The idea at once becomes a mere unconditioned idea of the result, and, if that result is as a direct consequence realized, we have genuine volition.<sup>1</sup> This distinction, taken in general, appears to be clear and simple, but to decide in

<sup>1</sup> It may possibly be objected that, unless I also believe that the result will take place, that result is not volition. But unless the term 'belief' is improperly used here so widely that the objection disappears, I cannot assent to this doctrine. I shall return to this point in a future article [*E.* xxvi].

detail on the point at which an idea has actually lost its qualification as merely alien or imaginary might hardly be possible. And the attempt in such cases to estimate by rule the amount of my responsibility for the result, in the case of that result being unwilling, or again being willed, would at best be useless. It would probably end in that which has too deservedly given an ill name to casuistry.

We have seen the general conditions, according to which the act which results from a mental conflict is either to be taken as a volition or disowned in that character. The alleged case of an idea realizing itself openly in the face of its opposite we could not accept. It is not a fact, but is a very natural misinterpretation of fact. But, if the reader decides to regard it otherwise, the principles we have laid down will still enable us to deal with it. By these principles I judge ideas and desires to be higher and lower, and to be mine and not-mine, and I can apply these distinctions to the alleged case in two different ways. I may narrow the definition of will so that the case falls outside and can be disowned as volition. And, if so, will is 'the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified, provided that this idea is not too much opposed materially or formally to that which is higher than itself and is essentially mine'. In view of the ambiguity of language, such a proviso would, perhaps, be defensible, but for two reasons I do not propose to adopt it.

In the first place, I have convinced myself that the fact alleged is not really a fact, and in the second place, even if it were a fact, I consider that the proviso is not wanted. The idea realizing itself openly against its contrary would in this case be a volition, and we certainly must go on to allow that this volition would be mine. But with so much the question is very far from disposed of. The act would be my volition, but it need not be my volition in the sense that I should impute it to my genuine self, and consider that I on the whole was accountable for its existence.

I am not inquiring here as to what in the end can be morally justified, and I am not even sure that such a question is able to be answered. I am asking merely about the

way in which a man naturally judges concerning responsibility. And when we view things so, we are led, it seems to me, to the following result. Human responsibility is not a thing which is simple and absolute. It is not a question which you can bring bodily under one head, and decide unconditionally by some plain issue between Yes and No. It is, on the contrary, if taken as a whole, an affair of less and more, and it is in the main a matter of degree. And not being simple, it cannot be dealt with by any one simple criterion, but must be estimated, as we have seen, by several principles of value. It is indefensible to insist that I am absolutely accountable for all that has issued from my will, and am accountable for nothing else whatever.<sup>1</sup> If I have willed anything, I am of course in a sense responsible for so willing, but what that amounts to on the

<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is open to question, not merely on its positive side, but also otherwise. To say that I am to think myself better or worse for nothing except what directly or indirectly has issued from my will, is to come into collision with a body of sentiment which is not easily repudiated. Any doctrine of this kind starts on a path which in the end leads to a choice between opposite abysses (*A.R.*, chap. xxv). On this subject of moral responsibility I must be allowed here to protest against the assumption that it is tractable only when you introduce theistic ideas. On the contrary, I submit that it is precisely the intrusion of these ideas which has turned the question into a battle-field for rival dilemmas. For myself, when I am offered the idea of a moral creator who tries to divest himself by some ludicrous subterfuge of his own moral responsibility, or the idea of a non-moral potter who seems to think it a fine thing to fall out with his pots—when, I say, I am offered these decrepit idols as a full and evident satisfaction of the highest claims of the human conscience, I am led to wonder if the writer and myself, when we use the same words, can possibly mean the same thing. It is even a relief to turn back to the old view that the Deity is a person limited like ourselves, a person face to face with mere possibility and with chance and change, and in truth, like ourselves, in part ignorant and in part ineffectual. Such a doctrine, I readily grant, need not interfere with our human morality, but I must be allowed to doubt if those who more or less consciously would seek to revive it, can realize what it means. It would in the end leave the limited Deity together and along with ourselves in a Universe, the nature and sense and final upshot of which would in the end be unknown. I cannot myself admit that non-interference with our moral distinctions need be bought at the price of such ignorance. And there are also those who, accepting a more unlimited ignorance, would, in my opinion, be found in a less irrational position.

whole is a very different question. Being so far responsible I may on the whole be so little responsible for the act, that without hesitation I disclaim it and disown it as mine. If an abnormal idea, foreign both to my natural self as a whole and to the self which I have acquired, becomes so intense as for the moment to extrude or master opposite elements, the result may be formally a volition; but to make me on the whole responsible for such an act would be barbarous pedantry. For legal purposes we are of course compelled to do the best that we can. We have to abstract from the individuality of each case, we are forced to apply hard distinctions and more or less to ignore what refuses to square with them.<sup>1</sup> But when we try to judge morally, no such abstraction in the end is permitted. And here the question if an act is mine is very far from being simple. It must be considered from various points of view, and the answer, if we reach one, will be a conclusion drawn from more estimates than one. It will scarcely rid itself of degree and of 'more' and 'less', and be able to arrive at a clear verdict of 'Yes' or 'No'.

There would be little advantage in our attempting to enter further into this subject, and I will end by repeating those principles which we laid down at the beginning of this article. (1) If I can bring and retain A not-*b* before my mind, and cannot do this with B not-*a*, A is so far higher and is so far mine more truly than is B. (2) The same conclusion follows if, taken on the whole, A is more pleasant than B, or less painful. And if any idea has moving force out of proportion to its pleasantness or, again, to its freedom from pain, that is, to some extent and so far as it goes, a sign of the idea's alienation. It is, so far as it goes, a reason for taking the idea as not genuinely mine. This is, however, a criterion which cannot be applied indiscriminately. In the first place, where an idea moves us at once

<sup>1</sup> Thus for criminal purposes, I believe, in at least most codes, a man must be mad or not mad. But it is notorious that, apart from the difficulty of such a clean division, moral responsibility can exist among the insane in varying degrees. Responsibility in intoxication is again a well-known puzzle which law must cut with a knife.

and before it is attended to, the criterion seems inapplicable, at least directly. And the ground which is here excluded is really large. And in the second place we must lay stress on the words 'taken as a whole'. It is too commonly forgotten that, when we are moved, the facts are often complex, and that it is a question not of either pleasure or pain but of a mixture of both. Thus any idea, no matter how painful, will, if it remains held before us, produce a feeling of self-assertion with a tension against fact, and so to some extent must become pleasant. The view that a man can will that to which he is averse simply, or even in the proper sense averse actually, is in principle erroneous. And when Dr. Stout (*Manual*, p. 604) adduces fascination as an example of the first kind, I must consider this indefensible. For if fascination is used negatively for paralysis, there is no act, while if it is used positively for attraction, the presence of some pleasure seems even evident. (3) If A is the outcome of and represents something like a deliberate choice, while this is wanting in the case of B, B is so far the lower and the less mine. And similarly (4) if A appears as falling under a principle, while B is taken as under a principle lower and less general, or as under no principle at all, A will again to this extent be higher, and will be so far more mine. (5) And last we come to that most important criterion of all, which consists in the material difference of content. If A represents some main interest of my being, and if this feature is not contained or is to a less extent contained in B, then, according to the degree in which it is more absent from B, B is so far lower and is not mine. I need hardly point out that this last principle has a very wide bearing. It is applicable where there has been no mental conflict, and where there has been no question about the presence or the absence of volition. And to some extent this remark will also hold more or less if applied to those criteria which precede. But to dwell on this point would perhaps not repay us.

Will may therefore be defined as the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified, and we have found no reason for restricting or for modifying this account.

But the reader must remember always that a subordinate element contained in an idea has no right to be counted as an idea, if it is taken by itself. And in any case let us avoid anything like an appeal to an unknown Will. If we find facts which we cannot explain, let us by all means collect them and class them, and, if we think we are justified, let us again by all means set them down as inexplicable. But what in psychology is gained by referring them to an unknown power, by whatever name we entitle it, I am unable to perceive. On the other hand, I am persuaded that by our so doing a great deal may be lost.

## THE DEFINITION OF WILL (I)

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THE object of this article, and of two which follow it, is to explain and defend a definition of will, a definition which has been already laid down by me on various occasions.<sup>1</sup> The only proper explanation and defence of it would be a psychological treatment of the whole practical side of mind. I must content myself here with endeavouring in an unsystematic manner to advocate a view which, the more I see it criticized, strikes me more as the one view which is tenable. But the will of which I speak, is the will which is known and experienced as such. It is not something in a world beyond and behind the contents of our experience, something to be reached only by an inference valid or vicious. In other words we are to remain here within the limits of empirical psychology.<sup>2</sup>

A volition is 'the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified', and in psychology there is in the end no will except in the sense of volition. We may speak of a permanent or standing will for a certain end, and may talk as if it existed there where at the moment no actual volition is present. In the same way we are said to have a permanent belief, or again a permanent attention, where for the moment we are not supposed to be actually attending.<sup>3</sup> But though a 'standing will' may be used with a legitimate meaning, there is in the proper sense no actual will except in volitions. Will therefore is action outward or internal, but on the other hand not every action is really will. You cannot even say that an action must be will in all cases

<sup>1</sup> *E.* xxiv and xxv. Cf. *E.* xxiii and xiv.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *E.* xxii. The above statement does not mean that a volition may not be continued beyond the limits of what we experience. See below.

<sup>3</sup> *E.* xxiv. 438. The meaning of 'a standing will' is a point to be discussed in a later article.



where in some sense I impute it, or should impute it, to myself. But, wherever an action has the character laid down in our definition, I should impute to myself that act as a volition. Language and experience bear, I believe, an overwhelming testimony to this result, while upon the other side, apart from lax expressions which do not claim to be more than lax, I am unable to find more than misunderstanding and error. If in these articles I can remove some more or less serious mistakes, the doctrine which I advocate will, I hope, recommend itself to the reader.

A volition, I have said, is the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified, and a volition is a whole, in which we may go on to find the following aspects. There is (1) existence, (2) the idea of a change,<sup>1</sup> and (3) the actual change of the existence by the idea to (4) the idea's content. And (5) in this change the self feels itself realized. The self is altered to something which before the change it actually was not, something which it felt to be its own proper being and existence. Up to what point, however, the actual realization of self must be felt, and again how far the self, beside thus feeling, must also perceive itself and so be self-conscious of itself as an object, are questions which will have to be discussed in their own place.

It is difficult in a series of articles to make a beginning except from some assumption. I think it best at present to assume provisionally the existence of what is called 'ideo-motor action', and to try to show that volition falls under this head. I shall therefore take for granted here the tendency of an idea to realize itself, and any question as to the existence and nature of this tendency must be deferred to another article. Let us then for the moment agree that ideo-motor action in general is a fact, and from this let us go on to consider in detail the aspects of volition which we have mentioned.

It may be convenient to take first the aspect of existence.

<sup>1</sup> Or we may prefer to say 'the idea of something different to what exists'. The precise content of this idea is a difficult question which will have to be discussed at length hereafter.

This calls, I think, here for but little remark, and any metaphysical discussion of its difficulties would be out of place. It is, we may say, the aspect of reality as opposed to anything that is merely ideal. It is the temporal series of events, external or inward only, when that is taken as an actual series; or again it is that which is now present to me, together with any actual prolongation which is continuous with and one with my present. How far the future, as well as the past, can be regarded in any sense as existing, I am unable here to discuss. Existence may be spatial also, and, as spatial, it will begin from my 'here' and will contain whatever is continuous and one with that datum. But I cannot myself agree that existence must always be spatial, unless I may add that it need not always be spatial directly. And there is no occasion, I think, at present for any further remark. The sense in which existence comes as a not-self in opposition to a self, as well as a reality over against an idea, will be dealt with hereafter.

Existence, then, is that actual series of events which is either (*a*) now and here, or is (*b*) continuous with my here and now. In volition (we must next proceed to note) this existence must be altered, and, further, the alteration must start directly from the existing 'now'. The change must begin on and from this 'present', and this present must be taken in its own character and unconditionally. But, while emphasizing this point, we must remember not to push emphasis into error. Volition certainly must begin from and on the 'this now', but volition as certainly is not confined within these limits. And it is wrong to deny that I can really will something to happen after an hour or after my death. I shall return to this error, but at present need insist only on the truth that, wherever volition ends, it must begin at once by an alteration of my present existence.

The reader may remember that this doctrine has been denied. It has, for instance, been objected that will does not always aim at an alteration of the present, for its end, we are told, may be a mere continuance and so an absence of change. But a continuance of the present in a certain character is, I must urge, if really willed, a real will for

alteration. The present is taken here as naturally, and of itself, about to pass into a different character, and hence, if I will that it remain the same, I must will it to change from itself. And if this conclusion at first sight seems paradoxical, I think that on reflection the paradox may vanish.<sup>1</sup>

In volition there must be an alteration of existence, and of existence as such. The change, which comes in, must not merely be something which in some indirect way belongs to existence, and qualifies that so as to leave it, so far, unchanged as existing. On the contrary, the change must directly qualify the existence itself in such a way that, even as existing, it suffers that change. The alteration in other words must not be merely ideal. This is a distinction which within my present limits I cannot fully discuss, but a failure to grasp it would leave the reader at the mercy of error. Let us suppose, for instance, that what I have willed is to think and know this or that, the result of my volition will here have two sides which we must not confuse. The object has been qualified ideally, and this, again, is an event which has happened in me. My existence has, as existence, been changed by my will, but the existence of the object itself, on the other hand, has not been altered at all. It has become qualified not in fact but, as we say, ideally; while the actual change which has taken place belongs, we say, only to me. It is impossible to ask here what is the ultimate truth with regard to this distinction,

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Med. Psych.*, p. 300, gives the instance of a martyr whose will is directed on actual pain. But the martyr's will, I reply, has for its object the maintenance of a certain attitude with regard to the pain. He wills that the pain shall not move him, and this means that it shall not take the course which it naturally would take of itself. His real end is therefore to alter existence, to change it so that it will follow a different course. The willed maintenance of an attitude, in short we may say, is a perpetual willed alteration of existence. We may notice here another doubt which perhaps may be raised. Will is not always for something to come, it may be said, for I can will, however unsuccessfully, to alter my past. But, I reply, the fact that the change, when made, would here lie behind me, is really irrelevant. From the point of view of the act itself the change is future, and the act starts from the present state of things and alters that. I shall consider later how far the fact of Resolve can be taken as an objection to the doctrine of the text.

but the distinction itself must be observed in psychology. If by your volition you have, for instance, produced truth and knowledge in yourself, you may by a legitimate abstraction neglect the aspect of its appearance in you, and so take the truth merely as being such or such in itself. But if, while still maintaining this abstraction, you attributed the resulting truth to your will—you would have fallen into a very serious confusion and mistake. At least for psychology the will to know cannot alter the real object known, and it cannot, in other words, make truth. Your will to know alters your actual existence, and with that there comes a changed appearance of the object in you, but the object itself is not thereby changed. The truth in brief has two aspects (I do not ask how they are connected), and it is only one of these aspects which can be produced by your will. The ideal qualification of the object has been a real change, but it has not, at least for psychology, altered the object as existing.<sup>1</sup>

From this I will go on to lay stress on another important point. Not only in volition must the existence be altered, but it must be altered to that character which was possessed by the idea. And not only must the existence suffer a change to this prescribed result, but the result must also be produced by the foregoing idea. The idea must itself alter the existence to its own nature, or in other words the idea must itself carry itself out into the changed existence. And, if all this does not happen, there is really no will, but at most a more or less explicable counterfeit and illusion. This point is so evident that I think it useless to enlarge further on it here, and will pass on to warn the reader against a dangerous misunderstanding. In insisting that the result in volition must come from the idea, I do not mean to assert that the idea must be the whole and the sole cause. This would be a doctrine which in my judgement could not possibly be sustained, and in short would involve a very serious mistake. I cannot here enter into the general subject of cause and effect, but for our present purpose I may perhaps express my meaning as follows.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here *E.* xxii. 370 and *E.* xxiv.

The idea is certainly not that whole complex cause which goes before and issues in the effect, but the idea is a positive and necessary element within that complex whole. It is not a mere accompaniment or a mere *sine qua non*, however inseparable or even necessary, but it enters directly into the causal sequence so as to make a difference by which the effect is produced. I think that this justifies us in maintaining that the alteration is due to the idea, and without so much as this I would submit that there can be no real will.<sup>1</sup>

And for this reason a result, when it has only been expected, is not taken as willed. Expectation is not volition except to that extent to which it is a will for apprehension, and is a will so far for a change of my psychical existence. If I expect the arrival of a letter and the arrival in fact happens, my idea has certainly been realized, but the result is not attributed to my will. The cause of the letter's coming is not taken to lie in existence *plus* my idea, but in existence qualified by other and independent conditions. We may illustrate again by the case of a spasmodic movement which is expected but not willed. The whole question is in brief whether, and in what way, my idea contributes or does not contribute to the result.<sup>2</sup> We may

<sup>1</sup> A machine might be such that, say, its whistling might be the *sine qua non* of its work, since both in fact are effects from one and the same cause. If the machine took the whistling to be the cause of the work, that would be clearly an illusion, and if the idea in volition were a mere *sine qua non*, will would also be illusory. It may be urged on the other side that if the idea is but one element in the whole cause, we cannot say properly that the effect is produced by the idea. An objection of this kind, we must however not forget, has a very wide application. I think it perhaps enough to reply here that, where we consider that such an element has importance, and where we wish to insist that its presence really, as we say, 'makes the difference', we may fairly speak of the change as being produced by it.

<sup>2</sup> If I have not misunderstood the doctrine advocated by Professor Münsterberg in his *Willenshandlung*, he considers the mere precedence of the idea enough to produce the appearance of volition. Any such doctrine would, however, seem to be opposed to the plain facts mentioned in my text. Since writing the above remark, as well as the present and the two following articles, I have made the acquaintance of Professor Münsterberg's interesting *Grundzüge der Psychologie*. The account of our volitional consciousness seems considerably amended there (pp. 354-5), but it

illustrate this once more from the other side by a different example. If, instead of the arrival of a letter, we take the cessation of a pain, we may now be unable to decide as to the expected result having issued from my will. And the question here again will be whether and how far the idea itself contributed towards bringing about its own existence. I shall have in another article to enter more fully into the conditions of our perception of agency, and it is sufficient to insist at present on these two main points. On the one hand the existence must be changed so as to express the idea, and on the other hand this change must not come from the mere existence itself. If we do not take the alteration to be made by the idea, we are bound to deny the real presence of volition.<sup>1</sup>

remains, as I understand it, fatally defective. When a man expects to yawn, and then this happens, it surely does not by itself give him the consciousness of will. On the other hand it falls, so far as I see, within Professor Münsterberg's definition. But the problem, I venture to think, has been made hopeless from the first by more than one unexplained, if not arbitrary, assumption, and I must regret that Professor Münsterberg's great penetration and ingenuity have not been applied in larger measure to the work of making clear his principles.

<sup>1</sup> On Expectation cf. *E.* xiv. 261, 278 and xxiv. 417, note 2. I do not admit that in all expectation there must be will or even desire, but, so far as there is will, it is a will only for the ideal development of the object in and for me, and any other will, if present, falls outside the expectation itself. It is instructive to take a case where I both will a result and also therefore expect the result to happen. We have here (*a*) the existence as it is now, and (*b*) the existence ideally qualified for me by the result, when taken by me as subject to the condition of my idea and a time-interval. And so far there is no opposition between my idea and existence, and no awareness of will. For the actual volition we must have also (*c*) an awareness of the opposition of my idea of the result to the existence as it is now, followed by the attribution (in some sense) of the actual change as an effect to the idea. We need not stop to notice also the further possible attribution of my better apprehension of the result, when it arrives, to another volition. What we should observe in the above case is that, for actual volition to take place, the consciousness of the time-interval must for the moment lapse, or at least pass into the background, and that on the other hand this consciousness is essential to expectation proper. A thing may be desired and expected, and may even be willed and expected, but, so far as in the proper sense it is expected, we must add that, so far, it is not properly willed or desired. If you do not feel the idea of the change to conflict with the present existence,

I have now to some extent explained the sense in which volition is described as the self-realization of an idea, but I have so far said nothing on the meaning of the phrase 'identification with self'. I shall discuss this latter point hereafter at some length, but for the present it must be deferred. There are difficulties which still attach themselves to the former part of our definition, and I must endeavour in this article to remove them and to correct some mistakes.

It may be objected first that will cannot be the alteration of existence by an idea, since there may be a volition where the idea does not really carry itself out. And as examples of this may be adduced such cases as resolve and intention, will in paralysis, and again the facts of disapprobation or approval. I will discuss these objections beginning with resolve; and in connexion with this point I must deal with a matter of importance, the difference between a complete and an incomplete act of will.

If intention and resolve by themselves were really volition, why should we hear of a *mere* resolve or of a *mere* intention? The question is obvious and, I will add, it points to an evident truth. A resolve in its essence is not a volition, and, so far as actually it is will, it is so but incidentally. The moral chasm between the two facts often cannot be ignored. It is plainly one thing to be resolved beforehand, and another thing to act when the moment has come. And, if resolve were will, then to make a hero, or again a monster of vice, no more would be wanted than defect of imagination with ignorance and foolishness. But a resolve really is not volition, and the point of difference seems clear. A resolve is directed, and it must be directed, on what we know is not yet actual, and so is only ideal; while volition, as we have seen, must invariably begin with the present

you have no experience of volition, and, so far as the certain future is emphasized, this opposition disappears. On the other hand, in all expectation there is a tendency for this qualification by the time-interval to drop out. The moment that this happens there is an opposition between the existence and the idea, and desire and perhaps volition may in consequence be generated forthwith. Cf. *E.* xiv. 261.

'this'. Volition on the one hand is not confined within one moment, and yet on the other hand volition must start always from the actual present, while in resolve, if this could happen, the essential character would be lost. I do not mean that the existence which resolve confronts is always conditional, though, where this is so, resolve, we may notice, remains still resolve. Resolve may be directed on a prolongation of the present which, though ideal, is unconditional, but it never in any case is concerned directly with the actual 'this now'. Its object is sundered from the present by an interval, and is known to be so sundered; and if it were otherwise, and if to the smallest extent resolve could deal with the actual 'now', it would have evidently ceased to be resolve and would have passed into volition.

This to me seems clear, and I take the denial of it to be an obvious error, and it is therefore desirable to ask how such an error can have arisen. The doctrine of will, we may remind ourselves, is full of difficulty, and a readiness to grasp at anything which seems likely to help is a natural weakness. But apart from this there are various causes likely to create confusion about will and resolve. (i) Will may be taken in the sense not of actual volition but of standing tendency. (ii) Resolve in many cases involves the actual volition of a psychical state. (iii) There is an incomplete as well as a complete act of will, and, though resolve never can amount even to an incomplete volition, it can partake of its nature. For incidentally it consists partly in the same process and goes some length on the same road. But in resolve (I would repeat this) the existence to be changed by the idea is severed invariably by a gap from the actual present. I will now proceed to explain these three grounds of error, beginning with the last, and in connexion with this I must emphasize the distinction between complete and incomplete will.

With will taken in its full sense I agree that psychology cannot concern itself. My will is not completely realized until its end has been actually attained, even if that attainment does not take place until after my death. And for some purposes the confinement of will to a narrower mean-



ing would not hold. But in psychology this complete sense is, I think, inadmissible, and the process of will cannot be taken as extended beyond the limits of my body. And even these limits, some would insist, are already too wide. If will is a psychical state, it cannot, they would urge, include a physical consequence; and even a psychical result must on the same principle be excluded from will. For a psychical fact, it can be argued, must in every case be defined as what itself actually is, and it is not characterized by anything beyond to which, however probably, it may lead. But I cannot for myself, even in psychology, accept on the whole such a limitation of will. I do not agree that, when a psychical process leads normally to a certain result in the individual's body or mind, the result can never be considered as part of the process. Such a question as how, for instance, I can will successfully to recall a word or to move my hand, must fall, I think, within psychology. I cannot naturally regard such results as events external to my will, and as additional consequences, the absence of which leaves my will unaffected. In volition the end anticipated in the idea is normally carried out into fact, and the process is normally recognized as a single movement of one and the same thing throughout. The removal of one part of this process leaves the whole incomplete, and to my mind modifies its character, and I cannot accept the mere beginning by itself as essentially complete.

Psychology, I agree, has to set bounds to its subject. The extent to which it can recognize physiological fact is limited. It will admit no more of this, in short, than it is forced to admit in order to justify its own account of psychical phenomena.<sup>1</sup> And psychology, I agree, cannot follow the process of will beyond the limits of the body, but on the contrary must take will as ended within them. While not denying, that is, the completer sense in which will goes

<sup>1</sup> On the one hand, physiological explanation and fact has, taken for itself, no place in psychology. On the other hand, if it is anywhere contended that a difference in the physiological explanation affects materially the psychological account, I do not see how such a contention can be on principle excluded.

on to a further end, the psychologist may fairly say that he is unable to consider it. And for certain purposes within psychology (as again within ethics) I agree even to a further limitation of will. The psychologist may narrow even further the meaning which he gives to the word, and may use it in a still more incomplete sense. He may take volition simply as that fact which at the present it is, without regard to anything physical, or even anything psychical, that we expect to result from it. Thus, if I will the movement of my hand, my volition, we may say, already is there, although my hand may perhaps in fact not actually move. And, if I will to recollect, then I may go on in fact either to succeed or to fail, but in each case alike my volition really is present. In this narrower sense we may for certain purposes take volition as actual. But I must insist that, however actual so far, my will so far is incomplete.

We may, in other words, distinguish roughly two periods or stages in volition. The first of these stages will consist in what may be called the mere prevalence of the idea, while in the second stage the idea will advance beyond its own existence towards its physical or psychical end. And I agree that in psychology we have a right to make use of these distinctions. On the other hand I urge that they everywhere involve some abstraction, and that this abstraction may be more or less artificial and vicious. There are cases where the action follows on the idea without hesitation or delay, and the stage of prevalence can hardly be said here to have an independent duration. And again the mere prevalence of the idea may itself go beyond the idea, for it may depend on the idea's carrying itself out to some extent into the fact. An actual movement of my body, however partial, may be the means by which the mere idea of such a movement prevails. On the other hand, in certain cases we may consider the whole process of will as roughly divided into two more or less separate movements. In the first of these the idea, we may say, merely as an idea gains possession of my mind, while in the second it advances further beyond itself to realize itself in the facts. And while I must insist that the first stage, if taken strictly by

itself, is not a complete or even really an incomplete act of will, on the other hand, viewed otherwise and under some conditions, the prevalence of the idea does amount to an incomplete but actual volition.

But it will be objected that, if volition may ever be such an inward event, our definition of will is no longer tenable. Is not the prevalence of an idea, I may be asked, something different from its realization in fact? In order to answer this question we must inquire in what this prevalence consists. The point is difficult, and, in order to deal with all sides of it, I am forced in passing to anticipate a future result.<sup>1</sup> In the presence of a practical idea we have of course an ideal change of existence, and on the other side, against this, we have the actual existence itself, existence merely psychical or physical as well. But in the presence of an idea which is willed or desired, we have another feature also. The existence outward or inward, which is to be changed by the idea,<sup>2</sup> is also in a special sense a not-self opposed to my inner self; and this opposition, we shall hereafter see, is essential to will. This feature may be called in a sense the idea's prevalence. For the idea is felt as something which is in one with my whole inner self, and hence nothing in me can oppose it except some element which in a sense is excluded from my self. Prevalence in this sense may however belong to ideas which I should agree are not willed, and by itself therefore it evidently is not enough for volition. And there is no reason why we should further here concern ourselves with it.

We may pass from this to consider prevalence in another sense more material to our inquiry. If an idea is to be willed, it must not merely be felt as in one with my inner self. In order to be willed it must also dominate my psychical existence, and must banish or subject to itself whatever there is contrary to its being and progress.<sup>3</sup> Now

<sup>1</sup> The point has been noticed briefly, *Mind*, N.S. x. 446 [*E.* xxiii. 397-8; 398, note].

<sup>2</sup> We must never forget that the existence to which the idea is opposed may be merely psychical.

<sup>3</sup> I do not here discuss how this sense of prevalence is connected with the

prevalence, taken in this sense, is clearly a process, and it may develop itself to completion through various stages and degrees. Hence we may agree that, when the process is complete, we have reached volition, but on the other side must insist on an inquiry into its aspects and stages. For here once again we may verify the presence of will as the self-realization of an idea. (i) The idea, in the first place, has to banish or subdue any idea contrary to itself, and it has to overcome hostility or inertia wherever that is found in any other psychical element. And (ii) together with this the idea must develop its own content. It must to some extent go on to specify and to individualize further its own proper nature. As the idea, say, of striking prevails, it will become at the same time less general. It will become more and more the idea of a blow of this particular kind struck by myself in my present individual character. (iii) And in most cases, though perhaps not in every case, where the idea practically prevails, the specification of the idea will already include and consist in some part of its realization beyond itself. The prevalence of the idea, that is, implies, as already actual in psychical and perhaps in physical fact, a part of that change which it is the business of the idea to carry out into existence. We shall understand better the importance of these aspects, when we have examined some cases where will is alleged to exist apart from a realization of its idea.<sup>1</sup>

former one. We have, on the one hand, an unwelcome fixed idea which gradually dominates me, until, all opposition being overcome, it is identified with myself. On the other hand, we have a desired end which I feel wholly to be mine, and which yet cannot realize itself against some part of my psychical being.

<sup>1</sup> With regard to using the impossibility of recall as a mark of prevalence, I do not think that by this we should really gain anything. The prevalence of the idea certainly implies that the process must advance unhindered by 'me', the 'me' being here understood not to contain any psychical element to which 'myself' is opposed. But this prevalence, we have already seen, is not volition. On the other hand, the impossibility of recall, if taken in a fuller sense, would be deceptive, for it would depend on circumstances more or less accidental. To pass to another point, we may here notice the question whether an act which takes time is to be regarded as one will or as several. We may answer that, so far as the sequel does not follow auto-

I will, however, first ask generally in what sense and how far these three aspects of the idea's prevalence amount to its realization in fact. (i) In its subjugation or banishment of antagonists, and in its possession, as we say, of my self, the idea takes a step without which it could not advance to its end. If, however, by an artifice you consider this aspect by itself, it will belong to the progress of the idea as a necessary condition, and will not by itself be that actual progress. (ii) But with the specification of the idea's content the case is modified. Certainly in itself this internal development does not carry the idea out beyond its own being into fact. But on the other hand it is itself the beginning of one continuous process which beyond a certain point does so alter the actual existence. (iii) And at least in most cases the process of prevalence has already gone beyond that point. It does to some extent, as we saw, involve an actual change of the fact so as to correspond with the idea. And this alteration, however partial and slight it may be, carries, so far, the mere idea beyond itself into existence. A state of mind, possessing these three aspects, is a realization of the idea which we must admit is incomplete, but up to a certain limit it is an actual realization. The idea has actually moved in the strictest sense on its anticipated journey. And measured by our definition such an advance may be called an incomplete act of will. A prevalence, on the other hand, which remained ideal and failed to include this third aspect, I should myself refuse to term even an incomplete volition. It is an approach to will which has stopped short of the actual state, and how it can seem to have reached it I shall soon endeavour to explain.

We have now to some extent perceived the nature of complete and of incomplete will, and the degrees by which completion may be gradually approached. I have pointed

atically from the beginning, the act may be regarded as having both characters. Each new change in existence, which is made directly by the idea, may so far be regarded as a new volition. This point may become important where the idea has failed to anticipate features which arise in the actual execution, and where in consequence the will becomes, as we say, paralysed, or has to be renewed.

out how, even in a case of incomplete volition, the idea to some extent has carried itself out into fact. And where this feature is absent the idea may in a sense have prevailed, but I should certainly refuse to admit that volition has begun and that will is present. I can hardly hope that so far I have conveyed my exact meaning to the reader, but this meaning will, I trust, show itself in our examination of detail. And we may forthwith return to those cases where volition was alleged actually to exist, and where on the other hand the idea was asserted not to carry itself out. We may take first the objection which has been based on the fact of will during paralysis, and we may join with this an inquiry into what is called a 'will' for something not under our control. I shall then consider such an instance as our unsuccessful will to recall a name, and from that can pass to the claims of resolve and approval.

If a man's arm is paralysed so that in fact he is unable to move it, he is none the less able, we are assured, most fully to will this movement (see Professor James, *Psychology*, chap. xxvi). I do not question here the fact itself, but I should interpret it as follows. The patient perceives the existence of his limb as it is, and over against this he has the idea of its alteration. This idea possesses him, and, apart from the above perception of existence, it finds in him nothing which seems to oppose its complete realization. The idea starts unchecked on its anticipated course and becomes more particularized, and then, at a certain point beyond this, it ceases to advance. But, although the idea no longer goes forward, there is a sense of actual volition. Now, as I understand the facts, the idea, in most cases at least, succeeds to some extent in passing beyond itself into actual fact. It moves not the part required but other parts of the body (James, *ibid.*). And, where this is the case and where such an actual movement is also perceived, I take it to explain in accordance with our definition the consciousness of will. The idea has moved forwards towards the change of fact, not only, as we say, in its own character, but beyond itself into an actual movement of the body. And this movement will, I assume, be perceived as a con-

tinuance of its progress. And a process carried out to this point may, I think, be taken as a volition which is actual although incomplete.<sup>1</sup>

But, it may be urged, there are cases where the idea does not advance outwards even up to this point. In these cases the idea remains entirely within itself, and after all there is an actual experience of will. If this does not take place in paralysis, I may be told, it happens often elsewhere. It happens where I will, for example, the movement of something outside of and unconnected with my body, as, for instance, the arrival of a letter or a change of position in the furniture of my room. Now, with regard to this alleged fact, I do not dispute that in a sense it takes place, but as to what happens when it takes place I remain in some doubt. For myself, usually, where I will, let us say, a chair to transport itself across the room, I find that I connect this anticipated movement with some bodily act of my own. A fixed glance, an order uttered inwardly or some other slight movement, goes in most cases together with the 'prevalence' of the idea; and this actual movement, I believe, enters into the process of that idea's content. And, so far as this is so, the idea once more has carried itself out beyond itself. The idea has begun an actual change of the opposed existence, partial indeed and indirect, but enough probably to give the sense of its process having passed out into fact. And there is a further point which, in connexion with all these cases, I would recommend to the reader's notice. If I 'will', let us say, that a letter has arrived or that a chair

<sup>1</sup> The movement is not perceived as a complete carrying out of the idea. For in the first place the part moved is not that part of which the movement was willed. And in the second place, even if the two perceptions were to some extent confused, the absence of movement also in the required part, an absence which is perceived, would lead us to regard our volition as frustrated. On the other side our volition, though incomplete, will appear as actual. For the bodily movement, following in a continuous process on the prevalence of the idea, will naturally come to the mind as a sign that the idea has passed over into the body, however inadequately. And a process carried out to this point may in accordance with our definition be taken as will, as a volition which is not completed but which still is actually there.

of itself is to come towards me, I find that a vivid imagination of the event may be a condition of my willing it to exist. I may have, that is, to view with my mind's eye the letter now somewhere waiting for me, or I may have to see in imagination the beginning of the chair's advance. And, if I so help myself, I am able to reach an imperfect but actual consciousness of will, and I admit that possibly I may reach this in the entire absence of any bodily movement. This experience has perhaps an important bearing on our problem. We have willed so often in fact that we can will, as we say, in imagination, and while my hand is stationary I can imagine myself producing its changes. And let us for argument's sake agree that this may happen without a muscular movement. We call this volition imaginary because it is not directed upon our actual fact, and because its change is not the movement in fact of my real hand. But now suppose that, while I will in imagination some movement of my hand or of a chair, I have these objects at the same time actually visible before me. Their perceived rest must oppose the progress of my idea into the fact now and here, but on the other side their imagined motion will support its advance, and will so far give me the consciousness of will. We have only then to suppose some confusion between the object as perceived and as imagined, and the door is opened to a more or less illusory awareness of actual will. And this remark may have a bearing wider than that which appears at first sight. Where a process is familiar and where the beginning of that process is given, it is possible to gain a premature and perhaps deceptive awareness of the end. And in this way I think we may sometimes create a more or less fallacious experience of will.

The conclusion then, which so far we have reached, can be briefly resumed thus. An actual volition may certainly be involved in the prevalence of an idea, but that volition at the same time will be incomplete. But there will not be in any case even an incomplete volition, unless to some extent the idea carries itself out beyond itself. Where this aspect fails there will at most be a doubtful experience, due



to a confusion between imagination and fact.<sup>1</sup> We may verify the same result again in such a case as our will to recollect.

The idea of recalling some name or some other circumstance may be suggested to my mind, and I may decide by an act of will to carry out this recall. But the attempt may fail in fact to succeed, though the volition has been actual, and the idea, it may be said therefore, has prevailed but has not to any extent realized itself. This is an interpretation which once more I am unable to accept. There may have been in the first place a successful will for some internal utterance, and, apart from this, we may notice another important feature in the case. A will to recollect is a will to effect a certain change in my psychical being, and, even where this idea fails to carry itself out to the end, yet in its prevalence it may make, as we saw, some actual advance beyond itself. The possession of myself by the idea of a name to be recollected involves to a certain extent in fact the actual process of recollection. The recalling consists, that is, in the recovery of contiguous detail, and, so far as I can judge, wherever the idea of such a recall has become prevalent, that detail is in every case actually restored up to a variable limit. If so, the idea, we must say, has to a certain point realized itself in fact. If we take on the other side a case where my inability is more complete, I cannot myself verify in such a case the experience of actual volition. I cannot, I find, 'will myself' to know something, if my ignorance is too complete. Where this ignorance extends beyond a certain degree I cannot myself find a place for the will in question. I must either imagine my case to be other than in fact it actually is, or again I must content myself with the volition of something like a form of words, or else, to speak for myself, I cannot arrive at any experience of will. And this, I think, is not because volition

<sup>1</sup> If the mere prevalence of the idea is looked upon as a step towards its carrying itself out, and if it comes to the mind in that character, some consciousness of will would naturally result. I could not myself, however, admit the actual presence of will, except so far as the prevalence of the idea incidentally involves its actual passage beyond itself as a mere idea.

depends on any belief as to possibility.<sup>1</sup> It is because the idea has failed to develop and to realize itself even incompletely, and has not passed beyond itself even in imagination. And hence, if my interpretation of this obscure fact is correct, it will fall once more under the principle which we have already laid down.

I will now return to consider further the case of resolve.<sup>2</sup> We saw that resolve is not volition, since will is directed always upon the present, while an actual aim at present existence must be excluded from resolve. On the other hand, there are several causes which may lead to a confusion between resolve and will. In the first place, my being resolved may be a state of standing or permanent will. We shall inquire later as to the proper meaning which belongs to this phrase, but a resolve so understood, though in a sense it is will, is clearly not itself an actual volition. In the second place, I may of course have willed to form some resolution, and in this case there is certainly an actual volition. But what has really been willed is the production of the mental state called resolve, and the volition here and the resolve itself are clearly not the same thing. And there is in the third place another reason why will and resolve are confused. The essence of a resolve, we have seen, divides it from volition, for it belongs to that essence that a resolve is directed on something other than the present. And yet incidentally it may imply an actual though incomplete will. The idea in a resolve may to a greater or less extent carry itself out at once into actual fact, and, so far as this process takes place, it will involve a real volition. Or, again, in resolve the idea may be realized in an imaginary existence, an existence more or less confused with actual fact, and, so far as this confusion happens, the resolve will be accompanied by some consciousness of will. But every such process falls, we must not forget, outside the resolve, when that is taken in its own true and special character. That character implies that the existence which is confronted by the resolve is distinguished from the existence

<sup>1</sup> This point is discussed later.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. here *A.R.* 410 [= 463], note.

which is present here and now simply. And, if this consciousness of difference lapses, and so far as it lapses, resolve has necessarily so far ceased to exist. In other words, when I resolve, I must take my idea as not to be realized at once now and here. And if the idea were not thus separated in my mind from a possible advance at once into the facts, resolve would have passed into will incomplete or complete. It is, we saw, not true that the existence aimed at by my resolve is always conditional. That existence may be taken as certain although lying in the future; but in every case necessarily it is regarded as sundered from the present. Resolve, on the one hand, is no mere contemplation of an anticipated or imaginary case. For there is an opposition of the idea to the contemplated fact, and a forward movement of the idea to alter this fact to itself. And we have seen that incidentally this advance may imply such a change in the actual fact as amounts to a real though incomplete will. But such a change, I repeat, is so foreign to the essence of the resolve that, if it were directly aimed at, the resolve would knowingly have passed beyond itself.

There are some additional cases where it is urged that volition can be present, although in these cases the idea fails to pass beyond itself. I must however defer the consideration of what Professor James has called 'consent', and the discussion of any argument based on Mr. Shand's 'types of will'. I shall explain hereafter why I am forced to reject these doctrines, and I must content myself here with some very brief remarks on the subject of approval. The approval or again the disapproval of a mere idea has been held to constitute will, and such a doctrine once more is in conflict with our account. There are two ways in which 'the idea' may be here understood. It may be taken as the idea of a change to be made in my present existence, and in this sense we have in effect discussed its claim already. There will be an actual volition so far as such an idea prevails, and so far as in its prevalence it also succeeds in carrying itself out. Apart from this process my approval certainly is not volition, and, where this process is present,

my approval adds nothing to will. If, on the other hand, the idea were not an idea of a change here and now, volition so far would be even excluded by approval. To approve of things as they really are, or as they are imagined to exist, is to take an attitude in itself contrary to actual will. The subject of disapproval, so far as that requires any further treatment, must be deferred. Disapproval in itself is not will and, so far as it becomes will, it falls under negative volition. This is however a topic too obscured by error to be briefly discussed. I shall consider it hereafter at length when I examine some alleged irreducible types of will.

I have now dealt with several objections raised against our definition of will. They have been based so far on the assertion that the idea in will need not carry itself out beyond itself. And I have tried to show that such an assertion cannot be maintained. I must pass from this to examine some other views which in my opinion are mistaken, and we may begin with the alleged necessity in will for the presence of judgement or belief. But before I discuss this, I will remark on a point of importance.

We have seen that the idea in volition must prevail and dominate, and this in the end means that we are moved by but a single idea. I do not say that beside this one idea no other idea can be present in will, but, if present, no other idea can be the object of will or desire. It cannot be the suggestion of a change which, felt in one with my inner self, then moves itself towards its own existence in fact. So far as in volition we have the presence of two moving ideas, one of these, unless it comes as a not-self opposed to my inner self, must tacitly or explicitly be subordinate to and included in the other. It must enter the main process as a passive accompaniment or as an active factor, and it may contribute to the total idea positively or again by the way of its own subjection or banishment. I have explained the above doctrine in a former article and to this I must refer.<sup>1</sup> If in will there ever remains an independent prac-

<sup>1</sup> *E.* xxiv and again *E.* xxv.

tical idea which is not thus subordinated, that idea will belong to the not-self which is opposed to myself. There is not really a divided will and there is not even a divided desire, if these are understood as volition and as desire which actually exist. The plausibility of the opposite view comes mainly from a mistake as to what is meant by 'one idea', and this logical error has resulted in mal-observation of the facts. But I am unable here to do more than refer the reader to my preceding articles.

This doctrine of the idea's monarchy has another side which I will now proceed to notice. The idea which realizes itself in will must be the idea taken as unconditional and unmaimed. I do not mean that the incomplete realization of a positive idea cannot be will. Under some conditions I have agreed that an incomplete process may be an actual will carried out imperfectly. But under other conditions the passing into fact of anything short of the idea in its entirety must be denied to be will. And there are cases which exhibit strikingly the truth of this principle. If my idea contains the restraint of A, and if A then is carried out into fact unrestrained, my idea, it is clear, has not been realized. The same conclusion holds where my idea was to realize A modified and subject to a condition, and where in the actual process this modifying condition falls out. In these cases the result indubitably has not come from my will. And we must again deny will where my idea has indeed been actually carried out, but where the result follows not from the idea itself but from some other condition. The future application of these doctrines will show their importance, and I must content myself here with inviting the reader to notice them. I will however add an example which I have not invented. A priest in hearing a confession may himself pass into the fault reported by his penitent, and this result may be culpable, but presumably it is not willed. The idea, we will assume, has here carried itself out, but it has done this in such a manner as to lose its identity. Provided, that is, that the idea has remained qualified in my mind as the act of another, it cannot in its proper character, and as such, realize itself in my person.

Such an idea, while it maintains its integrity, cannot pass into will, and any consequence, therefore, in the strict sense is not an actual volition.<sup>1</sup>

I will proceed from this to examine the mistaken doctrine which I mentioned above. Beside the prevalence of the idea it may be contended that volition implies always a judgement or belief, a judgement, that is, with regard to my future or at least my possible action. This is a doctrine which I have never been able to accept. We may begin by distinguishing two senses in which judgement can be used. In its ordinary meaning a judgement about the future asserts its idea of my 'real' world, a world which includes everything which is taken as continuous with itself and in the same plane with its own 'reality'. But there is a wider sense also in which judgement may be taken. In this wider sense every possible idea is at the same time a judgement, and, in being entertained, is *ipso facto* used to qualify reality. The imaginary, the absurd, and even the impossible, are upon this view all attributed to the real, for all ideas in a sense, so far as we have them at all, are the predicates of reality. It is, however, not in this wider meaning that a judgement about the future is asserted to characterize volition. Indeed in this wider sense we should judge of the possible and the future as of something which *is*, and with this clearly we should have removed the distinctive essence of will. But in any case, I submit, it is not true that in volition the idea is always the idea that *I* am about to do something. I cannot admit that the qualification of the change as my act must always in volition form a part of the idea's original content. This is a point which I shall hereafter endeavour to make plain, and I can do no more here than recommend it to the notice of the reader. Its consequence, if made good, must be the rejection of the whole doctrine we are discussing, whether that is taken in a wider or in a narrower sense.

<sup>1</sup> This distinction between an unqualified and a qualified idea bears on the question why ideas do not always realize themselves. I shall deal with this point hereafter, when I have to show the means by which ideas carry themselves out.

The sense in which judgement has been actually claimed to be essential to will is the narrower meaning which it more commonly bears. And the claim so understood seems to me to be in collision with fact, and the origin of the mistake can, I think, also be shown. I will point in the first place to the collision with fact.<sup>1</sup>

The presence of a judgement in all volitions certainly cannot be discovered. You will not find it everywhere when, apart from theory, you examine the facts. If you take the case of actions where without delay the result follows the suggestion, no one, apart from theory, would deny that many such actions are willed. To suppose on the other hand that everywhere, before or even during such an action, there is a necessity for the judgement that I am about, or if possible about, to perform it, to my mind is indefensible. Unless you confine will arbitrarily to a certain number among reflective volitions, I cannot find this judgement, and I must express my disbelief in its existence. I will however not dwell on this point, but will leave it to the consideration of the reader. It serves, if made good, as a disproof of the alleged necessity for judgement.

I will however add to the above objections an additional difficulty. In a highly developed mind and under exceptional circumstances there may happen, I think, a case of the following nature. There may be present a judgement of the kind required, and then an act in which the idea is realized, and yet in spite of this there may be no real volition. I may have an impulse to sneeze where I have also a desire to restrain myself, and the impulse may induce a moving idea of its result, and even also the judgement that probably or certainly I am about to produce it. And yet, if the act follows, and is even the effect of the idea and the judgement, the act under some conditions must and would be denied to be a genuine volition.<sup>2</sup> I am aware that according to some writers such a complex case

<sup>1</sup> In the above I am taking belief throughout as identical with judgement, but for some purposes I should consider it needful to distinguish them sharply from one another.

<sup>2</sup> I have discussed these conditions in *M.* n.s. xi [*E.* xxv].

is not possible in fact, and, if the judgement amounts to what we call a lively impression and a vivid belief, I am inclined to agree with them. But otherwise I think a judgement of the kind required may be present in the case I have mentioned, and yet its consequence may be evidently not genuine will. And I submit this objection to the reader for whatever it may be worth.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Stout has adduced and discussed this instance (*M. n.s. v*, on 'Voluntary Action') and in connexion with it defends the doctrine criticized in the text. But the view which he advocates remains to me untenable and also obscure. 'Volition is a desire qualified and defined by the judgement that, so far as in us lies, we shall bring about the attainment of the desired end' (*l.c.* 356). The words 'so far as in us lies' may, however, be understood in several meanings. They might be qualified either by the addition of 'physically' or 'psychically', and, when we adopt 'psychically', we may do this in more senses than one. We may take volition to be complete when there is a certain judgement about the future together with desire, or we may mean that beside this a domination by the idea is required. But the discussion in the text provides, I think, for the whole of these cases, since in the main it rests on the denial of a necessity for any judgement at all. With regard to the presence of desire I shall hereafter explain that in my view desire is most certainly not necessary for will. But, to pass from this and to return to the instance of the unwilled sneeze, I do not understand that Dr. Stout could deny the possibility here of a desire for the result as well as of a judgement in the absence of will. And I may perhaps urge this as an objection, although I could not myself admit a desire here in the strict sense of actual desire. In addition I may remark that in any case 'desired' must be understood as 'desired to be had here and now', and the judgement must refer to an immediate production of the result. If on Monday I have the belief or judgement that on Wednesday I shall assuredly be tempted to realize an end which I even now desire, and shall infallibly, 'so far as in me lies' and apart from interference, bring about this result—such a state obviously need not already be an actual volition, and it need not even amount to a resolve or intention. So far as the desired end is viewed by anticipation as being realized by something in the future, it is so far not willed or intended by me. You do not get present agency unless my idea is opposed to fact, real or imaginary, and against this present fact realizes itself and me. I have however already explained this point in distinguishing expectation and again resolve from will. But the words 'so far as in us lies' are capable of yet another interpretation. They might mean that, in order to be a genuine volition, an act must proceed from my higher or true self, and that, if it is to a certain point irrational, it must be denied to be will. I do not know how far I should attribute such a view to Dr. Stout. It is a point discussed by me in *M. n.s. xi* [*E. xxv*]. I may say in conclusion that I have considered the remarks



But if in truth no such judgement belongs to the essence of will, how, we may be asked, can a mistake of this kind have arisen? There are two reasons, I think, which have combined to make it plausible. (a) A judgement is the way in which we often and naturally express the fact of volition or resolve. It is not, however, a necessary expression or an unfailing accompaniment of this fact, and it may be so formulated as to become even incorrect and misleading. The judgement never is correct unless it refers to the volition as to a fact independent of itself. Thus 'I shall certainly do this' may mean that I am so resolved that on the occasion my volition will happen. Or it may refer to an actual volition already begun, and may assert that this process is about certainly to complete itself. But the resolve or the volition are here regarded as facts, the existence of which does not depend on my judgement about them. The judgement therefore, even when correct, is not essential. It is no more than an accompaniment, and, even as an accompaniment, it need not be there. And on the other side the judgement may take a form which is not even a tolerable translation of the fact. 'I want to do it, and so naturally I am sure to do it as far as lies in me,' would not be the expression of a present resolve or of an actual will. It is the voice of one who passively contemplates a future state of moral drift.

(b) There is another reason why a judgement has been supposed to belong to the essence of will. 'One cannot', it is said, 'will to realize an end which one regards as impossible, and in willing therefore one must judge that the end is possible.' But surely there is no force in this unless you assume the necessity for some judgement, and this assumption, I have pointed out, is opposed to the facts. We may, however, in this connexion inquire how far we can will the impossible.<sup>1</sup> We must, I think, assert or deny a will for that which is judged to be impossible, according to the

which (in *M. n.s. vi*) Mr. Shand has offered on Dr. Stout's doctrine of will. I cannot however say that in consequence I have been able to find this view clearer or more satisfactory.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here Professor James, *Psychol.* ii. 560.

sense which is given in each case to these words. If the act is kept before the mind in the character of a thing which is impossible, no volition, I believe, can ensue. And the same conclusion holds if for 'impossible' we substitute 'doubtful'. I do not mean that an act cannot in some sense be judged to be doubtful or impossible and at the same time be willed; but an act cannot be willed if, in being willed, it comes before the mind as impossible or doubtful. If, that is, the idea remains actually conditioned in this manner, it does not itself issue in an act; and, if an action comes, it will certainly not be the volition of this idea. A judgement, we may say, that some end is impossible or doubtful prevents incidentally the prevalence of the idea in our minds, and so by consequence destroys the beginning of will. And this is true, but the more correct explanation is as follows. The idea of an action, if qualified as impossible or doubtful, is not truly and correctly the idea of that action. It is really a complex in which the simple idea of the act is an incomplete element. The act therefore, if it follows, is not the realization of the genuine idea, and so by consequence it is not so far a genuine volition. The idea of anything as doubtful, impossible, or imaginary, cannot as such become fact, and, if an action is to come from such an idea, that idea must alter its character. Its qualification may either pass wholly from before the mind, or it may be relegated to some other world remote from practice.<sup>1</sup> And, so far as this happens, the unqualified residue becomes and can work as the unconditioned idea of the act. Such an action, though it may be will, is not however the volition of the original idea, and I need scarcely add that it does not require and depend upon a judgement.

I will at this point very briefly notice several fresh errors. I cannot accept the doctrine that desire is essential to will.

<sup>1</sup> The extent to which such a division in the self can be carried is in some cases considerable. The subject is further discussed in *M.* n.s. xi [*E.* xxv]. The reader will notice that I treat as an obvious mistake the doctrine that the idea's content is not affected by a change in its modality. This mischievous error is far too prevalent.

Where volition follows on a suggestion and follows without delay, to assume that desire in any proper sense must invariably be present seems plainly indefensible. I shall however return to this point in a later article. Another more palpable mistake is the identification of volition with choice. The nature of choice is again a subject to be discussed hereafter, but, where choice is taken in anything like a natural sense, it obviously is not coextensive with volition. And this fact to my mind is so clear that I can see no advantage in discussing it. I must again adopt the same attitude with regard to attention. If attention is understood in the sense of an active attending, I cannot verify its invariable presence in will. Such a claim, it seems to me, disappears on confrontation with fact, and I have dealt with it, so far as is required, in a former article, *M. n.s.* xi [*E. xxiv*].

The objections, which so far we have considered, admit the presence of an idea in volition, and have been directed more or less against that idea's self-realization. I will proceed now to those which deny that an idea is essential to will. There are undoubted acts of volition, it will be contended, where no idea of the end is even present. And such a contention, if made good, would be a fatal difficulty, but on the other hand I cannot doubt that it is opposed to the facts. In every case of will I must insist that an idea is present; and, if an idea is not present, no one, I believe, apart from some prejudice would call the act a volition. We have in this connexion to deal with the actions which are termed impulsive, and with these we may take acts from imitation and from the word of command, and, generally, whatever act is suggested by a perception. Mr. Shand, again, would instance here the facts of what he terms 'negative' and 'imperative' will.<sup>1</sup>

The above objections are based in the main on one kind of mistake, on a misconception, that is, with regard to the real nature of ideas. When such misunderstandings are

<sup>1</sup> *M. n.s.* vi on 'Types of Will', to which article I refer the reader for Mr. Shand's views in this connexion. They will be discussed hereafter.

removed it will be found, I think, that the objections are groundless. And I will endeavour to indicate the main errors on which they are based.

(i) An idea (I must insist) has not always a simple character, and what we term 'our idea' or 'our object' may be often the fragmentary aspect of a complex whole. To speak in general, our apparent idea and our real idea may fundamentally differ, and this difference, if unnoticed, may result in delusion. For what we call 'our idea' may in truth be incomplete or again irrelevant. I have had already in previous articles, as in the present, to call attention to this truth, and the neglect of it is a source of widespread error. An idea cannot be identified at pleasure with something less or something more than itself, and the question as to what in a given case is my actual idea, may entail a careful inquiry.

(ii) An idea may exist and may yet be unspecified and general. In order, for instance, to act on the idea of avoidance or injury, I need not have the idea of injuring or avoiding in some particular manner. The alternative, between the presence of an idea in a specific form and the absence of an idea altogether, is radically mistaken. I agree that something more particular than the general idea must exist in my mind, but I deny that this something (whatever according to the case it may be) must itself belong to the content of the genuine idea which I use. The whole assumption, if I may be plain, is the merest prejudice. In the course of the act itself the idea's content will in its process further particularize itself, but before the act the genuine content of the idea may be general. And it is perhaps sufficient here to call attention to what I will term this evident truth. Once assume that an idea must be specific or be nothing, add to this the assumption that whatever appears at first sight to be our end and object is always really and truly so—and you may be taken far, but unfortunately away from the truth.

(iii) An idea itself is not an image, nor is it always even based on an image as distinct from a perception. The denial of this truth is a prevalent error, and it underlies

the mistake we have last noticed. But, so far as I can perceive, it is itself a mere prejudice. If a perceived object is to have a meaning and is to convey that meaning to myself, the meaning, I agree, has in a sense to be detached or loosened from the object. But this loosening does not imply always the existence of an image or images, separated from the object and maintaining themselves, for however short a time, as individual or particular. Such an assertion would not hold of our intelligence even when highly developed. Suppose that, in answer to the question 'What has he done?' or 'What shall we do?', a feather flying in the air is actually shown, such an example to my mind is a conclusive refutation. It seems absurd to insist that here no idea and no meaning can be conveyed unless through the medium of individual images. Such images, separated from the feather and existing in a middle space *en route* until their fresh subject is reached, are to me mere inventions. The meaning in a more or less general form, is, I should say, conveyed direct from the feather to its new subject, and the necessary middle-space with its separable images is a creature of mythology. And such a doctrine at a lower level of mind would be still more inapplicable. When a breast appears to suggest sucking, or a fruit eating, or an enemy avoidance or injury, that doctrine would insist that in the absence of individual images, existing separated from the perceived object, there is no suggestion at all. But this to me is plainly untenable. The idea here is the perceived object, so far as that is qualified inconsistently, and qualified in such a way that its meaning in part is made loose from itself. This meaning can therefore be applied as an adjective to a fresh subject. And, in short, generally, the identification of the ideal with separate images, and the alternative between such images and no suggestion at all, may be set down as erroneous.<sup>1</sup>

If we return to the objections founded on the alleged fact of will without the presence of an idea, we may now discover them to be invalid. The removal of errors will

<sup>1</sup> On this and the preceding error cf. *M.* o.s. xiii. 23 [*E.* xiv. 269-70] and *N.S.* x. 5 [*E.* xxiii. 391].

have left them without plausible ground, and, confronted with the facts, they will, I think, disappear. These facts are in general the actions suggested by something perceived, and in particular they are the acts from imitation, from the word of command, together with the acts called impulsive. And with regard to these our position may be stated as follows. If in the act an idea is suggested and realizes itself, that act is volition, unless the idea in some way has lost its own character and has in effect carried out something which is not itself. If, on the other hand, no idea has been suggested, the act has not been really willed. This result I believe to be in accordance with the use of language and with popular opinion, and I do not suppose that it would be useful to dwell further on the matter. The appeal is to the reader who will carefully consider the issue. In every case we must ask whether a suggestion was or really was not made, and, if a suggestion was made, we must then go on to put further questions. What exactly was that suggestion, and did it carry itself out in the act, and did it realize precisely itself or, on the other hand, something less than or beyond its true meaning? I am content to leave the issue when thus defined to the reader's judgment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are a few points here which I would ask the reader to notice. (i) Will and volition are not taken to include what is called a standing will. (ii) To urge that the idea is often the creature of a blind impulse, which it does but passively translate, is quite inconclusive. If the 'impulse' is entirely without any consciousness of end, then, of course, so far it is not will. On the other hand, given the idea, the question of that idea's origin is by itself irrelevant, unless you are asking when and how the volition arose. The real question is whether in fact the idea, when it is there, carries or does not carry itself out in the act. The act is or is not will, according to the answer given to this question. (iii) I shall deal with any objection based on the alleged 'imperative' and 'negative' types of volition, when in their proper place I dispose of these doctrines. (iv) It may be instructive to quote from Mr. Shand's interesting article (*M. n.s. vi. 290*) what seems on another point a serious misunderstanding of fact. 'If we are angry with some one, ideas of hurting or paining him occur, and we sometimes find the pain or injury has been inflicted without any prior consciousness on our part that we were going to inflict it. If we are reproached for the action, we say we did not "mean" to do it.' This statement seems to contain more than one ambiguity, but I will confine myself to the words 'mean to

From this I will turn to an objection which may be urged from the other side. Your definition, it may be said, if not too narrow, is at least fatally wide. 'The self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified—this covers', I shall be told, 'facts which too evidently are not willed. When a man gesticulates so as outwardly to express his idea, this process by your account must be volition, while in fact it is not so. And you must include cases where by unconscious movement a man betrays that very idea which he is bent on concealing. Acts done in imitation will, at least sometimes, present the same difficulty, as will again instances where involuntarily we manifest our latent hostility or affection. Add to these the unwilled acts that result generally from a suggestion, if that is overstrong, or if on the other hand the mind is enfeebled permanently, or again temporarily as in hypnotic states. And the question surely, when you consider these cases, is settled. You have defined volition so as to bring this whole mass within its limits, and with such a result your definition has broken down finally.'

Before I reply to this in detail I will venture to recall the general position to the reader. I am not in these articles undertaking to cover the whole ground of psychology. I am offering a definition of will which claims certainly to hold good everywhere. It claims, that is, wherever it is applied, to remain consistent with itself and with the common understanding of the facts. Hence I consider myself bound to deal with any case that is offered me, if that case do it'. Does the person using these intend to deny his volition? I should say certainly it is not so. He may intend to deny a deliberate volition or set purpose, but perhaps, and more probably, his denial refers to something else. He is saying that he did not mean to do, and so by consequence did not will, the particular act. He willed, that is, to injure in general but perhaps not to strike, he willed to strike but perhaps not with such a heavy stick, and at all events he did not mean that the blow should fall where it actually fell, and so did not will the particular result. The true question here is about the actual content of the idea, what that was, how unspecified it was, and how far the individual result can be taken as its proper self-realization. When the facts of the case are ascertained, and when they are approached in this manner, I cannot see that they really present any difficulty.

is so far defined that one could decide in practice whether it is or is not volition. On the other hand, I cannot fairly be asked to explain mental situations which are perhaps excessively obscure or otherwise difficult, merely because they are offered unexplained as an objection. I have to state the principles by which all such cases must be judged, and I am bound to show that when we judge them, and so far as we judge them, the principles hold good. But if a psychical state is so ill-defined that the person who offers it is not prepared exactly to describe it, or to decide if in practice it would be accounted a volition, I cannot be expected to discuss such a fact. Whatever psychical state, in short, is produced as an objection, must, so far as is required, be described by the objector himself. And I hope that on this point there may be a general agreement.

This being understood, I proceed to consider the instances offered above, and I find that I can at once dispose of a considerable part of them. The idea which in will realizes itself is the idea of a change to happen here and now in my existence. But it is obvious that in gestures, or in whatever may be called the mimic expression of an idea, the idea does *not* contain the element of my changed existence, and therefore in such a change the idea does *not* carry itself out. The gesture may as a gesture be willed, and if so we of course have volition, and a volition which exactly corresponds with our account. But, if the gesture is un-willed, the change in my existence is indeed caused by the idea, but on the other hand it never was contained in that idea. And, not being contained in the idea, it cannot have been carried out by it. The idea has not realized itself, and by our definition there has been therefore no will. The same thing holds of those movements by which I involuntarily reveal the place of a hidden object. These movements come from my idea and they betray it, and yet you cannot say that the idea has realized itself in them. For the idea of an object in such or such a place is not the idea of my change. The idea of my directing a person to the object, if that idea were unconditioned and so carried itself out, would by our definition be will. And the act would,



I think, be so accounted in practice. On the other hand, if the same idea is present in subordination to, or even coupled with, the idea of my preventing its result, then that result, if it happens, is not a volition. It has realized but a fragment of my total idea, and such a fragment, we have seen, is not my idea truly. So again with our involuntary instinctive movements of affection or hostility. If these do not in any sense come from an idea of their happening as a change in my present existence, they are not willed. And, even if they result from that idea, they are not willed, unless the idea became unqualified and expelled or subordinated its rivals. For otherwise it was a mere element in an ideal complex and was not properly an idea. But if the idea dominated, the act has been certainly willed, and in practice it could not be disowned as volition.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to acts done from imitation there is room for considerable doubt. But the doubt applies merely to the facts of each individual case and does not affect the principles on which our decision is formed. 'Imitation' I use here to cover cases where the perception of something done by or happening to another leads in me to the occurrence of the same action or state. And taken in this wide sense, imitation, I presume, must occur at a stage where the ideal suggestion can hardly be supposed to exist and carry itself out in the mind. Whether this wide sense should be narrowed we need not inquire, nor can I even touch on the difficulty which attaches to the beginnings of imitation. We are concerned here merely with the principles on which such acts are asserted or denied to be will, and about these principles I see no occasion for doubt. Where there is no idea of a change in my existence, there is by our definition no will, and the same conclusion is even more obvious where no idea at all is present.<sup>2</sup> And the

<sup>1</sup> I may once more remind the reader that this subject has been discussed by me in *M. n.s.* xi [*E.* xxv].

<sup>2</sup> We must not forget here that an ideal suggestion may come direct from a perception, and that usually, though not always, the presence of such a practical suggestion in me involves *ipso facto* the dropping out of the element of an alien personality.

result again is not willed if the idea does not of itself carry itself out. And once more, so far as the idea realized is but one element in an ideal complex, we must so far deny volition. The result from any idea which is qualified incompatibly with its own self-realization, we have seen, cannot be will. The priest who, hearing confession of sin, through that hearing sinned himself in like fashion, need not, we have seen, have actually willed this result.<sup>1</sup> In order here to pronounce on the presence or absence of actual volition, we must be further informed. The idea may have remained involved with another's personality, or may have freed itself from that condition, or it may again perhaps have turned that condition into an element in a new complex idea of sin. In the two latter cases the result presumably is will, while it is otherwise in the first case. But in view of the endless complexity of fact we may well qualify this sentence, and it is better to say that will is absent or present so far as each situation is realized. We must repeat this conclusion wherever an act is suggested by another's personality through imitation, through the word of command, or in any other possible manner. It is not enough to know that the result has arisen from an idea, and has even in a sense come from the idea of a change in my existence. We have in every case, before we pronounce, to ascertain the details more clearly. Was the idea qualified by a condition such as that of an alien personality, a condition which makes it impossible that the idea should as such be realized in me? The result, if so, has not realized the genuine idea and is so far not will. On the other hand, if the suggestion was freed from that alien condition, how far was it freed? The idea of another man striking, if as such it causes me to strike, is so far not a volition. And the same conclusion holds if the idea was of another desiring or ordering me to strike. The question of the idea's qualification in any given case is a question of fact, and, before that case is used as an objection, this question must be answered. And, however

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember that I am not speaking here about degrees of responsibility. I am asking what I at least regard as a very different question, What is and what is not a formal volition? (Cf. *E.* xxv.)

it is answered, my difficulties are at an end, since they seem to come solely from the obscurity of the individual case. At the risk of wearying the reader, I will illustrate this further by the case of action under threat. If for instance a man signs a paper when threatened, is the act a volition? In order to answer this question we must be informed of his precise state of mind. Was he moved, in effect, by the mere overpowering force of the suggested signing? Did he, again, act on the mere idea of escape with momentary oblivion of all else? Was it the idea of escape merely by writing his name, or again by writing his name with a certain meaning, and, if it was the latter, what was precisely the actual amount of this meaning? When these questions are settled we may hope to decide as to the presence of a volition, and as to the limit up to which that volition extended. But, while the fact remains obscure, it is no fault in the principle if it cannot be applied. We may give the same answer with regard to acts performed in hypnotic states, whether natural or induced, and again in madness and generally under abnormal conditions. The question here as to the presence of formal volition is not, I must repeat, the question as to the existence and amount of responsibility. A man may will that for which he has little or no moral responsibility, and he may be morally responsible for that which he has not formally willed. But as to the presence of volition we must be guided by the principles already laid down. And these principles can, I submit, be applied successfully to every case which has been freed from obscurity.<sup>1</sup>

We have now, I hope, defended our definition from the charge of undue wideness. It will include no consequence

<sup>1</sup> If the suggestion of an act remains so involved with another's personality that it does not free itself, or again become the idea of my doing the act because of that other, the act is not volition. To take another case, if the resolve for a future act leads to action immediately, the act is not will. It fails to be will, because the idea was incompatibly conditioned. There was at most a partial will in the sense in which that has been explained to belong to resolve. The above doctrine as to a foreign personality raises, I may remark, no real difficulty with regard to acts done in common.

which leads to collision with general usage. On the other hand, the denial of an idea in will, we have seen, can in no case be sustained. We endeavoured to explain the various points contained in the realization of itself by an idea, and argued that these points are without exception necessary to volition, while some other features, such as belief and judgement, are not essential. And we defended the distinction between a complete and an incomplete act of will. We have so far neglected the latter part of our definition, and have not discussed the sense in which the self is identified with an idea. In the following articles I shall endeavour to fix the meaning of these words, and in several points to make clear what may so far have remained doubtful. But, before proceeding, I will seek to remove yet another mistake.

It is often held that the genuine object which we desire, and which again we aim at in volition, must be something which when attained falls within our existence. The end, it is contended, must be realized for us, and it is so realized when our idea passes into a perception. And beyond such a perception, it is urged, we can desire and will nothing. I have some years ago remarked on this mistake (*M. o.s.* xiii. 21 [*E. xiv.* 267]), but I will attempt very briefly to deal with it here.

We have already noticed the view, according to which volition does not pass beyond the idea. The present doctrine is an error of a different kind, and it concerns the meaning contained within the idea itself. It maintains that I cannot even aim at anything which is not to be experienced by myself. And this doctrine, though based on a truth, is itself certainly erroneous. I will pass by that form of it which regards my pleasure as my one possible end, and will confine myself to the view that I cannot aim to realize anything unless that is to be perceived or experienced directly by myself.

If this were true, it would in the first place condemn some experience as illusory. No one, apart from theory, doubts that he can desire and will events to happen after his death. And the suggestion that his real aim is not

those events, but is his own present certainty, would be dismissed as ridiculous. The objection, that after death a man's end cannot be realized for him, would be met by the reply that he never imagined his end could be so realized. An illusion, doubtless, is possible here and is sometimes present in fact, but it certainly does not exist in fact necessarily and always. It is, in short, the belief in this illusion which itself is illusory.

You may urge that a desire, which is not satisfied for my direct knowledge, must remain unsatisfied, and you may argue that in the end I can desire only that which would satisfy my desire. But in psychology, I reply, we can hardly insist on truth which is to be true in the end. And certainly we cannot assume as self-evident that all desires must be able to be satisfied, or identify my actual aim with whatever in the end that should involve or entail. You cannot argue, in short, that I have no desire for a certain object, if I perceive, or at least might perceive, that as such it would not satisfy me. For that personal relation to myself, which is implied in satisfaction, need not enter into the actual content of my idea. Desire is an inconsistent state, I agree, and its inherent contradiction, I agree, should be removed by satisfaction. But I cannot conclude from this that there is in fact no desire except for an end taken as attainable, and free from all inconsistency whether noticed or unnoticed. If you keep to the facts as observed, they are not in harmony with such a conclusion. And if you wish to make the mere existence of a mental state depend on its ultimate self-consistency, I cannot think you realize the effect and the ruinous sweep of your principle.

Volition (and in this respect it diverges from mere desire)<sup>1</sup> does imply a change to happen here and now in my psychical existence. And there is no will, we have seen, unless the idea has begun to carry itself out. This process so far may be said to turn my idea into a perception for me, and this perceived alteration may so far be said to be involved in the object of my will. But it is not true that the

<sup>1</sup> I shall return to this point hereafter.

process always must end at this point, and it is not true that the process is intended always to end there. If the idea of an event after my death is to be realized by my will, that process involves an immediate change in my perceived existence, and my idea so far must become a perception for me. But to maintain that no more than this was contained in my genuine idea, and that, with so much, my genuine idea has completely carried itself out, seems indefensible. The will is so far actual, but so far it is not complete, and it has stopped short of the goal which most certainly was aimed at. Psychology, we have agreed, may at a certain point cease to consider the process, but it must not, on this or on any other account, falsify the actual content of the idea. The general nature of that content is a difficult problem to be discussed in a later article, but we cannot take it as confined always within the limits of my perceived existence.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I do not here discuss another possible ground of the above mistake. This ground would consist in the doctrine that my psychical states, such as ideas and perceptions, cannot also and at the same time be more. On this point see *M. n.s.* ix. 5-7 [*E.* xxii. 369-71].

## XXVII

### THE DEFINITION OF WILL (II)

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WE have defined a volition as 'the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified', and in the foregoing article we to some extent explained the first part of these words. I shall now proceed to show what is meant by a practical identification with self. I am in the present article still forced to assume the fact of 'ideo-motor' action, but the nature of this will be discussed on a later occasion.

To ask what is meant by the identification of an idea with my self, would in the end raise the whole question of the essence and origin of consciousness. We find that self and not-self are related both theoretically and practically, and we may inquire in general if these terms and their distinctions are original and ultimate. Or, if this problem is dismissed or is placed on one side, we may discuss the question of rank and priority as between perception and will. Since practice implies knowledge we may contend that the latter must come first, or we may on the other side reduce theory to a one-sided development of the practical process. We may insist again that neither attitude is higher in rank, and that neither taken by itself is original or prior. Both appear together, we may add, as essential aspects of consciousness, and we might go on to investigate their exact nature when first they appear, and attempt to trace their development from their earliest forms, if not from states which are neither. But in this article it is not my object to pursue such inquiries. I shall take the theoretical and the practical relation of the self to the not-self as facts of experience, and shall try to point out some aspects which are contained in both, attending specially of course to the practical side. Facts of experience the reader must understand to be experienced facts, and he must not include in

these anything so far as, remaining outside, it appears in or acts on the experienced.

If in this way we examine the practical relation of the self to its world, we at once discover the features which were set out in our definition.<sup>1</sup> There is an existing not-self together with the idea of its change, and there is my self felt as one with this idea and in opposition to existence. And there follows normally the realization of the idea, and so of my self, in the actual change of the not-self; and this process must arise from the idea itself. And the process, at least to some extent, must be experienced by my self. In volition, if I attempt to find less than all this, I find that volition has disappeared. And, taking this for granted, I will go on to consider the practical relation in its distinction from mere theory, and I will try to indicate that special sense in which the self is practically made one with the idea.

(i) The not-self, we have seen, is an existence, and this existence is for me. It comes before me or comes to me as a perceived other or as an object. Now in the practical relation it is important to observe that this 'other' has two senses, and that only one of these senses is found in mere theory. It is in the sense common to theory and practice alike that I am going first of all to consider the object. The perceived object, we may say, on the one hand comes as something which *is* independently, and on the other hand it is felt as something which is for me. I am not attempting here, the reader will understand, to explain or to justify the apparent facts, but am endeavouring merely to describe them. The object *is* in a sense which is not applicable to the whole felt moment, for, while the object is felt, it is also experienced as other than the felt self. It is therefore for me as something which is not myself. But to say that its relation to me is an object, or that my passivity towards it is an object, would certainly be false. How far these aspects may become objects at a later time and for reflection, I do not here inquire; but at first and in their essence, while we confine ourselves to the theoretical atti-

<sup>1</sup> *M. N.S.* xi, No. 44 [*E.* xxvi]. The reader must also be referred here to the article on Conation [*E.* xxiii].



tude, they certainly are not objects. In the 'felt-mine' of the moment the object appears as something other than the rest, but its relation to the rest, if we are to speak of its relation, is a matter of feeling.<sup>1</sup> That relation with both its terms must fall within what is experienced, but only one term of the relation is experienced as an object. The not-self so far appears as an other, but not as an opposite.

(ii) In the practical relation the aspects we have described above are still to be found, but another feature is added which transforms the character of the whole. This feature is the opposition between self and not-self. In my practical attitude I experience myself as something contrary to the object. I do not merely receive the object and feel it as mine, although other than me, but I also feel myself as something which is opposite and struggles to change it. And in this total feeling both the not-self and the self are present now as contrary realities. The relation with both its terms now appears before myself as two objects, but in what sense I am an object to myself we must go on to inquire.

In my practical consciousness there is a relation, we saw, between the not-self and an idea. This idea is the idea of a change in that object not-self, and the idea in its conflict with the not-self is itself an object for me. Hence a relation with both its terms is now before me as an object perceived. But this relation on the other hand is not merely a new perceived object. For I feel myself one with the idea in a sense in which I am not one with that object which opposes it, and therefore in and through this idea I feel myself in collision with that object, which has thus become in a further sense something alien and not-self. And my felt oneness with the idea and felt contrariness to the conflicting existence are not two separate facts, but are inseparable aspects of one fact. Whether in any sense opposition can otherwise be experienced and known I do not here inquire, but except through an idea there is no opposition if that is really practical and means will. And this is a point

<sup>1</sup> I should perhaps remind the reader that I do not accept the restriction of 'feeling' to denote merely pleasure and its opposite.

which has perhaps been sufficiently discussed in previous articles. The practical relation depends on an idea, an idea with which in a special sense I feel myself to be one, and this idea is an object and it conflicts with an object. But, as for myself, I am not properly an object to myself except so far as I enter into the content of this idea. How far I must so enter is however a question which must be deferred for the present.<sup>1</sup>

(iii) This practical identification of self with the idea may be called specific,<sup>2</sup> and we cannot explain it in the sense of accounting exactly for its quality. On the other hand, we can indicate the distinctive feature which it adds to mere theory, and we can show some conditions which its presence implies. This may be done most clearly, perhaps, in reply to a possible objection. 'The self', it may be said, 'is identified alike with every one of its contents, and, as to the idea, you admit that the idea is an object and a not-self. Is not then the special oneness of the idea and the self something which in the end is meaningless?' In replying to this objection I shall have in part to repeat what I have put forward already.

In the practical relation we can find in the first place an existing not-self. There is an object, and it is felt as mine though as other than me. And we have in the second place an idea which conflicts with this existence. This idea once more is an object, and it is felt likewise as mine, and felt likewise again as other than myself. And so far we have no aspect, it may be said, which is not found in mere theory. For we have two objects in relation or two elements of one complex object, and each of these is mine and is not-mine in precisely the same sense. But we have so far left out of

<sup>1</sup> This is the question as to how far self-consciousness is present always in will.

<sup>2</sup> We must however be careful to avoid exaggeration on this head. I consider that, apart from the practical attitude, the self can be aware of the agreement or disagreement of its own felt content with that of the object before it. I think that such a sameness or difference may be felt, and the feeling then translated into a judgement. And if this were not possible, we should, I think, find it difficult to account for some aspects of self-consciousness. This is a matter, however, with which I cannot deal here.

sight the essential and differential feature of the case. The idea in collision with the existence, although it is an object and a not-self, is also, in its conflict with the existence, felt specially to be mine and to be one with myself. Hence this special feeling attaches itself to but one of the two objects before me, and it qualifies that one in its actual opposition to the other. The existence therefore, being opposed to what is specially one with myself, becomes *ipso facto* itself opposed and contrary to me. And I, in my union with the idea, am in conflict with existence. And thus by one and the same means the idea, though a not-self, is felt as myself, and the opposing existence becomes a not-self at a higher remove. It thwarts the self in the idea and is so experienced as in collision with me.

I have explained that I assume nothing as to any temporal or other priority, and I am far from maintaining the possibility in fact of a mere theoretical attitude. But to the reader, who will not forget this necessary warning, I will offer what follows as perhaps a help to a better understanding. Let us suppose a self with an existing object, and let us suppose that the contents of the self and of its object are discrepant. The felt content of the self will here be hindered in fact by the not-self, but the self so far will not know that itself is hindered. It will on the other hand feel the uneasiness of its checked expansion, and its object will become disagreeably qualified. But now let us suppose further that the main aspect, in which the self is hindered, itself qualifies the object inconsistently with the object's existence, and so itself becomes an idea for the self. With this the whole situation is forthwith changed. In this idea we have now an object in collision with existence and hindered by that. And the self now feeling itself to be specially at one with the idea, itself is hindered by existence and is aware of the hindrance. And the existence in this way has become not merely other but opposite. We in short have risen into the level of actual conation and will.<sup>1</sup>

(iv) The actual volition, we have seen, is the alteration

<sup>1</sup> I will once more here refer the reader to my previous articles. Cf. also *A.R.* 547-8 = 606-7.

of existence so as to agree with the idea. The existence, we may say, is changed by the idea to itself, and in the same process the self as one with the idea realizes itself in the not-self. This process of self-realization must, up to a certain point, be experienced as such by the self, and the self must become aware also, however momentarily, of the resulting harmony and peace. My world in a completed volition is not merely something which is there for me and which agrees with itself. My world has become so far the existing expression and realization of my own self. And, so far as this result goes, the not-self persists only as the medium and element, in which I have carried out and am satisfied with my being. It will repay us once more here to contrast the practical with the theoretical mode of consciousness. In the practical relation both self and not-self are alike qualified discordantly by the idea of the change. There is on each side a discrepancy between existence and idea. The idea both is and is not the adjective of the not-self; and the same thing again is true in the case of the self. From the one side as limited by actual existence I am not changed, and on the other side I feel that I am qualified by the idea of the change. I feel myself one with the ideal change in its opposition to the actual existence. Hence the process, which carries out into fact the content of the idea, realizes for me my inmost being which before was ideal. And because I am aware of the idea as itself making the change—a point which will shortly be discussed and explained—I am aware also that this change is the work of myself. In the result, therefore, I have expressed myself harmoniously on both sides of the relation.

The attitude of theory presents us here with an important contrast. The theoretical not-self, as we so far find it, may be discordant in various degrees, and the reality may more or less conflict with the idea which endeavours to express it. And in this discordance, since it qualifies me, I may suffer internally, and by its removal, so far as it is removed, I may feel myself expanded and satisfied. But the process here is experienced as in the main the self-realization of the object. The process can hardly be alleged

to be made by the idea, and most certainly the process is not made by myself. My self in one with the idea is not opposed to the object, but on the contrary I follow the fortunes of the not-self, and receive from that inactively my part in its failure or success. I may will to think and to perceive, and in some thinking and in some perception there is doubtless will. But this will is not aimed at an alteration of the object itself. Its end is the appearance of the object in me as, apart from any will of mine, the object is real. And an attempt to make the truth other than it is by my will would at once subvert or at least transform my position as perceiving or thinking.

(v) There are several points on which I will now endeavour to obviate misunderstanding. The existing not-self is not always my external world, but may consist in any existence of and within myself which is opposed to me.<sup>1</sup> We have here within the whole, which is felt as my present being, the opposition of two objects. We have the idea of a change in some existing feature, and together with this first object comes the feeling of myself as specially one with the change. But, on the other side and as a second object, we have the actual feature of myself as I exist in fact, and this second object is a not-self which is opposed to the idea and to myself. And we have then the process in which the inner self carries itself out into this not-self. Everywhere, to pass from this special instance, we must bear in mind a general result. An element, which in one sense is a not-self, may in connexion with an act of will take a different position. And this is a point to which I must invite the attention of the reader. The not-self in a volition is always more or less particular and limited, and it is limited, we may say, for the purpose of the volition. Beside those internal feelings which have not even the form of a not-self or object, there will be tracts even of our outer world which for the moment will share their position. They will not make part of that not-self which opposes the idea and our volition. They will on the contrary fall back into that general mass which is felt as myself, a mass which in various

<sup>1</sup> Cf. here my *Appearance*, 83=97.

degrees qualifies me as in the idea I oppose myself to the not-self and so carry myself out. In will (to repeat this) the not-self which conflicts with the self is but one part of my world. The rest will lie within that self which is one with the idea, and will to a varying extent in the conflict support the idea and the self. On the whole, we may say, and in the main, there is between my world and my will no discrepancy, and, if it were otherwise, life could hardly be lived. Even the extreme case of suicide throws no doubt on this truth. For there is never, even there, an opposition between my world and the mere will for its negation. The conflict on the contrary is always between various elements within the self and its world, and it is this whole which in exceptional cases is distracted fatally. The same general result holds good also, but with a difference, in the case of the theoretical relation. The object for perception or thought is never the mere whole reality. Our object is a partial appearance, in which and as which the reality is for us, and in the end the opposition is between the concrete reality felt as a whole and this its partial appearance.<sup>1</sup> But in this conflict I, as distinct from my world, cannot actively take part. In will, on the other hand, the conflict is between myself, as expressing the main reality and the true self, and as identified in feeling with the idea of a change, and over against this some existing particular feature of the whole. And this feature, we have seen, as thus contrary to me is in a special sense alien and not-self.

(vi) I will pass on from this to emphasize two points of importance. In the first place both self and not-self must in volition have a concrete content, and both must be actually experienced in their own proper nature. We must have an experienced relation between two experienced terms, and, if it were not so, volition would not be 'a fact of experience'. If it were not so, an experience of activity or

<sup>1</sup> An idea is false, we may say, in so far as the reality cannot be expressed by it without conflict, and a will is bad in so far as the idea fails to express the genuine nature of myself. In this article I am concerned only, it will be understood, with the formal essence in which all volitions agree, and I pay no regard to any 'substantial' or 'material' differences between them.

passivity, or of self and not-self, would become unintelligible, if at least we mean by such an experience the awareness of these things in their own proper characters. We should in each case be speaking of something, about which by the conditions we could have no knowledge. And the reply that other men, though not the present writer, can distinguish between the fact of activity and the awareness of that fact, is to my mind irrelevant. For it would hardly follow that we may speak of activity and of will as existing there, where by the conditions we could not possibly be aware of their existence. Such a knowledge, if maintained, seems at least to require some explanation. And it is surely misleading, I would add, to term activity a fact of experience, if it does not itself fall within that which is experienced.

In will the terms and their relation and, in short, the whole process is experienced, but this process in all its aspects is not experienced in the same sense throughout. (*a*) The existence and the idea of its change, we have seen, are both objects. And the self is an object to itself so far as it is contained in the idea—a point to which we shall presently have to return. And the self again, as itself carrying itself out into fact, must to a certain extent be perceived as an object. But however much these aspects of the whole come before me as objects, they are none the less experienced also as elements felt within the 'now mine'. And (*b*) this experience of my total present is itself not an object, and it cannot in the end even for reflection become an object throughout. And (*c*) the same result holds of my identification of myself with the idea. The felt oneness of my inner self with the idea of the change cannot become an object, unless we go beyond and unless we so far destroy will. It does not matter how much my self has passed beforehand into the content of the idea, and it does not matter how much my self perceives itself as carried out in the act. In the end my union with the idea must remain essentially a felt union, and, so far as by reflection it becomes an object, volition so far has been superseded and has ceased to exist. I do not deny that this union, while being felt, can perhaps to some extent also be an object, but it is merely as being

felt, I contend, that it moves. Its partial appearance in reflection, so far as it appears there, impedes it. And in the end no reflection can bring it before me in its experienced integrity. The same conclusion, I may add, holds good of self-consciousness in general. An exhaustive objectification of the present self remains in principle impossible; but this is a matter on which we are unable here to enlarge.<sup>1</sup>

I have now endeavoured to explain how in volition I am identified with the idea and opposed to the not-self. I have still to ask how far my self enters into the content of the idea, and together with this question I shall have to inquire into the experience of agency. But before I enter on this subject, I will endeavour to dispose of some remaining difficulties. I must deal briefly with the nature of reflective volition, and in connexion with this will remark upon Choice and Consent. And I will open the discussion of these points by stating a probable objection.

'Your account,' it may be said, 'whether so far it is satisfactory or otherwise, applies to will merely in its first and undeveloped form. But will in the distinctive sense is not found at that level. I do not really will until I suspend myself and consider my future course, and then assert myself in something like choice or consent. This is the essence of volition, and, however much your account may be laboured, this in the end falls outside your definition of will.'<sup>2</sup> Now I cannot here attempt even to sketch the development of will from its lowest form upwards. But in its highest form certainly no principle is involved beyond those which in our account we have set out already. And I will endeavour

<sup>1</sup> I cannot accept without qualification the statement that we are self-conscious in the practical attitude, and in the theoretical attitude no more than conscious. Not only, in my opinion, do we fail everywhere to be completely self-conscious, but I could not admit without some reserve the doctrine that all self-consciousness is in its essence practical. The above statement however expresses, if it exaggerates, an important truth.

<sup>2</sup> The same objection could be urged about our higher and lower will, our divided will, our attention, and so forth. I have already treated these cases so far as is necessary in *Mind*, n.s. xi, Nos. 41 and 43 [*E.* xxiv and xxv], to which latter article I may refer specially for some illustration of what follows.



very briefly to show how this is true. I will then point out the proper meanings of Choice and Consent, matters on which some dangerous confusion appears to prevail.

In the higher form of volition (so much cannot be disputed) we come upon a most important difference. Our will at this stage has become reflective. I do not here identify myself immediately with this or that practical suggestion, but on the contrary I regard these as things offered to me for my acceptance or rejection. This does not mean merely that I am inconclusively moved by conflicting ideas, and that I fluctuate and waver in their ebb and flow. And it does not mean that I am held motionless by balanced forces or paralysed by shock. The ideas are not mere forces which in me produce states of motion or rest. They are objects which I separate from myself and keep before me at will. The suggestions so far are mine, and again in another sense they are not mine, and their adoption in short lies entirely with myself. Of all the suggestions offered I may accept none, and, when I accept one, I do not merely become what is offered. I actively adopt the idea, I take it into myself, or, if you prefer the phrase, I put myself into the idea. This is a specific act, and with it comes a mode of feeling which is specific. And this by an exaggeration has been emphasized as a fact irreducible and unique.

The exaggeration being omitted I think the above statement is correct, but I claim that the facts are embraced by our definition of will. Indisputably the self is able to rise above suggestions. The self can in a manner alienate these from itself, and then, if it does not reject all, can adopt one of them formally. And it is desirable, I am sure, to lay stress on these facts. On the other hand I cannot take the facts as a kind of supervening miracle which, I know not how, is to prove something—it seems not easy to say what. The self can suspend itself, but, as soon as we inquire into the means, there is an end of the miracle. The means we can discover in every case to be a higher idea, and this higher idea, at least in one of its aspects, is the negation of the particular suggestions. It is with such an idea that in reflective will our self is identified. And the consequence,

that has been described above, is the natural result. Given a further and a remoter principle, not in union with the suggestions offered, or not in union at once and immediately with these suggestions as they are offered, and the principle of suspension and of adoption is present. The idea may be of a special end which must be reached by some particular method, and cannot unite itself at once with two methods, however much both belong to it. Or the idea again may be a principle which is general and abstract, and it may, for instance, consist in a rule of not at once deciding on offered suggestions. But, whether more or less abstract, the idea always works in the same way. My self is identified with it, and is hence related to the detail which falls under it. And my self is related to this detail positively, and also, as we have just seen, negatively. Hence my self can confront the detail as a spectator and can hold itself aloof. Then, as soon as one particular (however this happens<sup>1</sup>) becomes superior to the rest, and appears as the means by which the principle can pass into reality, the situation is changed. The self, in one with the principle, comes together with this single particular, and it feels itself reunited with its object by an act of adoption. And here is the origin of that felt estrangement and aloofness and of the following awareness of reunion. These experiences certainly are specific, and it would be strange if they were not so; and you may call them irreducible, if you mean that from their conditions they could not wholly be constructed. But, unless the doctrine just advocated is seriously wrong, these experiences are neither unique nor exceptional.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This question is to some extent dealt with in a preceding article, *M. n.s.* xi, No. 43 [*E.* xxv].

<sup>2</sup> It would be well I think if those, who maintain that they are so, would explain how much in psychology is *not* exceptional and unique. We have again, with a difference, the same experience of alienation and reunion when after suspense and doubt an idea is accepted as true. The conditions here, as we have seen, are partly diverse. It is here the not-self which first rejects and then reunites itself with the idea, whereas in will this is done by the self which is opposed to the not-self. The conditions and feelings in both cases may be called the same generically, but not altogether. We

If we take our stand on the principle which has just been laid down, we may without difficulty apprehend the essence of choice and consent. Choice, to begin with that,<sup>1</sup> is (a) in the first place not merely intellectual or perceptive. A process which ends with a judgement, even if that judgement is about the means to an end, is so far, we must insist, not a genuine choice. The process is so far not choice, even if it leads to the conclusion 'I like this best' or 'this is nicer'. Distinction by a type and the selection by a type of one thing to the exclusion of another, if you take this process as issuing in a judgement, is, taken so far, not choosing. Choice in a word essentially is will. It may be incomplete volition in the same sense in which Resolve was incomplete will (*E.* xxvi), but a choice always and without exception is an actual willing.

(b) In the second place a choice must be made between at least two things which move me. It involves a preliminary suspension, however brief, and that suspension comes, at least usually, from conflicting desires. But choice always and without exception is between two or more moving ideas. I may indeed be ordered to choose before I begin to desire, and in this case the suspension may be said to start from the suggested idea. But the choice, when it takes place, takes place always in essentially the same way. The suggested idea moves me as I am moved by my own idea of an ulterior end, and in each case I have before me two opposite means which prevent instant action. The means in every case must be identified with the moving end, and, if you use 'desire' here in a widened sense, the means in every case must both be desired. The fact that, apart from this identification, they may be indifferent or even repulsive does not raise really the least difficulty.

(c) We have to choose 'between' things, and the 'between' implies that one thing is rejected. To say 'take one' and to say 'choose one' are different requests. Unless the

shall once more notice this difference when we deal with the subject of Consent.

<sup>1</sup> The subject of disjunctive volition will be briefly discussed in the article following this.

idea of rejection is implied, and unless for the chooser this idea qualifies the act, we cannot predicate choice proper. If, in short, the 'between' does not come or does not remain before my mind, I may take one out of a number but I most certainly do not choose it. But the 'between' may be present to my mind in various senses and degrees, and let us consider first an instance where it is highly developed and explicit. Here I desire an end to be realized in one of two alternatives which I recognize in that character. Each of these, therefore, is qualified to my mind by the exclusion of the other. I consider these first in relation to my end as contrary means to its attainment, and I then pass a judgement on both, and in consequence will one of them. But it would be absurd to contend that the whole of this is essential to choice. For there need be no judgement, there need be no idea of means in relation to end, and there need be no foregoing idea of an end. The essence of choice implies no alternatives in the sense of disjunctives, and I will now go on to seek the minimum which is really essential. In this minimum there must be two ideas which move me incompatibly so that neither is realized. In the second place, I must not merely oscillate from one idea to the other, but notwithstanding their discrepancy I must desire both objects at once. The main idea which moves me must be felt to be present in each, and it therefore, in relation to each, is a higher idea. If upon this follows my identification of myself with one of these objects, and so my volition, the act is choice if it is qualified by the idea of rejecting the other. If, on the other hand, any feature in the above account be wanting, I no longer in any proper sense have chosen. A child desires two lumps of sugar, and from some cause perceives that both at once are not possible. Each piece excites the pleasant idea of taking and eating, and both still do this when an attempt to take one piece has brought in, and checked itself by, the perception of losing the other. The impracticable 'both' which is desired is in fact the cause of a moment's suspension. Then, through the pressure of appetite or from some other cause, an action ensues, and the idea of taking now is actually realized. But

whether the child has really chosen remains uncertain, and it entirely depends on the following condition. Was the idea of leaving one piece an element present in the act, or did for the moment the idea of this piece disappear simply? Choice in the latter case will be absent, while in the former it exists. There is choice because the idea, which acted, in the first place qualified both pieces, and then one piece with the aspect of leaving the other. And so much, I contend, is essential to choosing. On the other hand, there is contained here no idea of an end with its means, and certainly no judgement that one piece is nicer or is wanted by me more.<sup>1</sup> To resume, when I choose I must have before me two ideas under one head, and one of these ideas, when I act, must be qualified as excluded or at least as absent. If I merely lose sight of one idea, I have not really chosen. Hence choice cannot appear below a certain level of mental development, and most obviously it does not constitute the essence of will. Choice is perhaps not reached at all except in the case of human beings.

I will go on from this to remark upon the meaning of Consent. Professor James (*Psych.* ii. 568) has used this term to express the ultimate fact in action and belief.<sup>2</sup> I have already explained how far I can agree to call such experiences ultimate, and I will now point out why in the case of either action or belief the use of consent is really indefensible. In the first place my consent is given always to a foreign force, and in the end it is given always to a foreign will. In the second place consent is not my mere awareness that something is to come from this will, but it implies necessarily that to some extent I am responsible for the result. If, where I might have hindered another's act, I have not attempted to hinder it, I may be taken as a condition of the act and therefore so far as its cause. On the other hand, to call such consent my volition of the act would

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Shand, in *Mind*, n.s. vi, pp. 301 foll., appears to me to have seriously misapprehended the facts on this point.

<sup>2</sup> I do not know if this was suggested by Lotze's use of *Billigung*, *Med. Psych.*, p. 302. I have already remarked on Approval, *M.* n.s. xi. 453 [*E.* xxvi. 495].

be too untenable. And Professor James, excluding such tacit consent, finds the essence of will in the consent which is express. But while there is volition here certainly, so far as I will to express my consent, there is as certainly no volition of the act itself. And my consent never can amount formally to a volition of the act. Always in consent is interposed the idea of a foreign agent, and, however much by my consent I make myself a condition and so assume responsibility, I never, as consenting, am the real doer of the act in question. To give consent to an action, however expressly, stops short of uniting with another to will and to do it.<sup>1</sup> And consent is inapplicable to a common voli-

<sup>1</sup> Consent can of course be given in such a way that it amounts to an incitement, and it can be given in such a way as to have the opposite effect. But these effects, I submit, go beyond and fall outside of a bare consent.

A further inquiry into the nature of consent is not necessary here, but the following remarks may perhaps be of service to the reader. The difficulty of defining consent does not lie merely in the uncertainty of the particulars, but attaches itself also to the general idea. Consent is a positive attitude of mind which must exist positively to a certain degree. But on the other hand that degree is determined only by negation and by omission.

Consent is a mental attitude of one agent towards the act of another. The first agent must be aware of the act, and up to a certain point must share the sentiment from which it proceeds. That point is fixed by the presence of abstention from resistance to the act as proposed or from attempt to nullify it if existing. As consenting, I am dominated by a sentiment in accordance with the act, so far that either a feeling of hostility to it does not arise in my mind, or, if it arises, is prevented from carrying itself out. The result is that I do not oppose the act.

It is a further condition of consent that (*a*) the act must be taken by me as in some sense to concern me, and (*b*) some kind of opposition is in my power, or taken by me to be so. The act must fall within the region which I take to be the sphere of my will, and in this sense must interest me. And some kind of volition to oppose the performance or continued existence of the act is always possible here.

Consent must be distinguished from approval. Approval (*a*) extends beyond my personal concerns, and (*b*) involves some reference to a standard. In these two senses it is impersonal and disinterested.

Consent, in order to remain consent, must stop short at a certain point. If it becomes more than a positive state of feeling, measured and defined by abstinence, and if it passes into an attempt to further the act or commit it in common, it has ceased so far to be mere consent.

It is obvious from the above that the positive state of consent itself is not properly an act and is not itself willed. It might itself be willed as a

tion, because it implies that the actual will does not cease to be foreign. This idea of foreignness in the will from which the action proceeds cannot be removed from the meaning even of express consent. And hence as an expression for the essence of will consent is most inappropriate. My will is surely not the action of a foreign force in me, nor can it consist in my permission of such an event. Suggestions, we have seen, can in volition come before me as a not-self; but if, starting from this, I do not go on to make them mine, I have assuredly not willed. And in the presence of a great alternative, where I adopt one course with all the energies of my being, and throw myself, as we say, entirely into the carrying out of one event, to insist that all I do is to give an express consent to this event, somehow happening in me, seems really ridiculous.<sup>1</sup>

psychical effect, but as such it would be only the effect of a volition other than itself. On the other hand, the signification, to another or to my own mind, of my state of consent can obviously be willed. And that abstinence from opposition, which is one aspect of the consent, can itself again be willed. I can will to behave consistently as consenting without any ulterior end in view beyond this behaviour as following from the consent.

If on the other hand my behaviour, as consenting, or again as signifying consent, is willed as a means to the performance of the act in question, I have (as we have seen) passed beyond simple consent. I now have furthered by my act the act of another, and may even have joined with him in committing it. And the result here will be no longer the mere effect of my consent; it will be that effect as contemplated by me and set before me as my end. The mere foreseeing by me that in fact the effect will follow must be distinguished from this; and the difference between the two lies in the nature and action of the idea which in each case is before my mind.

Thus, even in theory, the mental state of consent is not easy to fix, while in practice the difficulty seems well nigh insuperable. The difficulty here lies mainly in knowing the exact nature of that to which at the moment consent is given. For the consent is given to something as it appears at one moment to the consenter, and as at that moment it is qualified by his feelings. But the exact nature of such an impression, as it happens in another, can be arrived at only by approximation and always presumptively. The difficulty again as to what is to be taken as and presumed to be a willed or unwilled indication or signification of consent, can only be disposed of roughly.

<sup>1</sup> The reason why Professor James, with all his insight, is led to advocate this absurdity is, I venture to think, at once clear and instructive. Professor James, as I have noticed before (*M. n.s.* xi. 297 [*E.* xxv. 452, note]), seems

Consent, we have seen, does not go far enough for volition; but for belief, on the other hand, it goes a great deal too far. In the theoretical relation the object comes to me as something foreign, but I can hardly give consent to the object's being in character what it is. I accept the fact that the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, but to give my consent or permission is not in my power. It is a fact which I cannot help or hinder, and for which I have no responsibility. I can of course will the appearance of the truth in my mind, but I cannot will the actual truth itself to be this rather than that. The attempt would obviously at once destroy my theoretical attitude. And even my attitude, when I will to receive whatever is the truth in itself, cannot be defined as my express consent to that reception. For, if I actively will the reception, I do much more than consent to it. Consent in short for will is too little, and for mere belief is too much. Truth, I agree, is the satisfaction of a want in my nature, and the criterion, I agree, in the end may be called a postulate. There is no attitude in fact which is simply theoretical, just as there is no attitude in fact which is barely practical. But after all there is a difference between thinking and doing, and a difference which happily is ascertainable. And this ascertainable character on either side alike refuses to be described as consisting in consent.

We now approach a difficult part of our subject, the question how far in will the self enters into the idea of the change; and we may connect with this question a brief inquiry into the meanings of activity and agency. The

to approach the facts of the soul with a mind too much dominated by mechanical metaphors. What moves in the soul is forces external and foreign. And when in use such principles fail, and Professor James sees their failure, instead of rejecting them as disproved he attempts to help them once again from the outside. My will is more than the resultant effect of foreign forces, and it is therefore something inexplicable which supervenes and is added from the outside at a certain point. And, being merely added, it does not and it must not transform the external forces. Hence the special virtue of consent, which on one side makes an assertion of myself, and on the other side still leaves the forces foreign.



reader, if he is unable here to accept our result, will, I hope, at least find matter which deserves his consideration. We have seen that the end of will, when that is completely realized, need not involve throughout the knowledge or even the existence of the agent. The necessity for my awareness in all cases of my own volition cannot in short hold except of the beginning of the process. As that process starts from within, I cannot fail to experience it and to know in some sense that the process is my act. But up to what point this knowledge and experience will accompany the process, cannot be laid down in general. If, that is to say, you take volition as the complete process in which my idea reaches its end, my awareness is certainly not throughout a necessary accompaniment of my will. My will, we have seen, may even extend beyond my existence.

This being dismissed, we may enter on a more limited inquiry, and may ask first whether and how far my self must enter into the content of the idea. The idea, we have seen, is always the idea of a change in existence, and certainly in some cases it is the idea of myself making this change. I as realizing the end am in these cases an object to myself, and it is this idea of myself which here makes the beginning of the process. Now no one can doubt that such an idea is often present in will, and I am not concerned to deny that it is present usually. But I cannot agree that in will the idea does contain my self always, and I do not think that I as making the change must always be an object to myself in the idea.

This question taken by itself has but little importance. On the one hand, volition is the identification of my felt self with the idea, and this felt self, we have seen, is so far never an object. And, so far as it becomes an object, the felt self so far is not the self which actually wills. Hence the presence or absence of my self as an element contained in the idea can hardly be vital. On the other hand, in every case after the process has started, my self must perceive itself to some extent as entering into this process, and to some extent therefore my self must in every case become an object

to itself.<sup>1</sup> And for this reason again the question, whether before the start I am an object to myself, does not seem in itself to be very material. But, since a confusion may give rise to dangerous consequences, the question, I think, must be briefly discussed.

I cannot admit that in all cases my self as changing the existence forms part of the idea's content. At an unreflective level of mind, whether in ourselves or in the lower animals, a suggestion, if it acts at once, need not be so qualified. The perception of another engaged, say, in eating or fighting may produce by suggestion these processes in me. And the result in such a case has on the one hand been certainly willed, but on the other hand the element of *my* fighting has not always been contained in the idea. An idea is present because the perception has for me qualified existence incompatibly with itself, and because this incompatible feature, opposed in me to the existing not-self, has then carried itself out. On the other hand, the idea is not the idea of the fighting of *another*, for this aspect of otherness drops out before the idea acts in me. And the question is whether the idea, in thus coming to me straight from the perception and in dropping out, as is necessary, some portion of that perception's content, must in part replace that omission by the insertion of my self. I know of no principle from which such a result must in all cases follow, and, as I observe the facts, the result in many cases is absent. The idea of fighting is felt in volition to be *mine*, but it need not contain *me* as an element in the ideal content. Neither the other nor myself need actually appear in that content, though the idea of fighting, freed from otherness, must be in relation with my not-self and must be felt as mine. Then, as the idea realizes itself, my felt self becomes in part also perceived, and in the actual process I acquire the experience of *my* fighting. And, if this is so, then in volition the idea is not always the idea of myself making a change.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is a point to which I shall return very shortly.

<sup>2</sup> We must be careful not to assume that at an early stage the perception of another's fighting comes to my mind as something belonging to

It is difficult to ascertain exactly what in any case is contained in the idea at the commencement of the process. For the process itself necessarily is perceived when begun, and in that experience the idea goes on to qualify itself further. When the idea of the change begins to realize both itself and me, I perceive myself as moving in one with the idea. I am aware of myself altering the existence so as to correspond to the idea, and in this union with the idea I become an object to myself. The idea thus develops and qualifies itself in a continuous process, and on reflection we may naturally take its acquired character as there from the first. And it is easy in this way to assume that my self as acting is present always in the idea at its start. But though my self is thus present often, and I am ready to admit even usually, my self, we have seen, is not thus present always or even normally. Nothing is normal and necessary except that the idea of the change should be felt as in one with myself, and then that its actual process should be perceived as my making the change. My self, in short, as making the change, is not in fact always preconceived in the idea, and, whether this takes place or not, it is in every case external to the essence of will.

A confusion on this point may threaten danger to our whole doctrine of volition. 'Your view', I may be told, 'is entirely circular and so illusory. All that you have done is to take the fact of will as an unexplained mass. You then transfer that mass in idea to the beginning of the process, and the process therefore naturally appears as the realization of this idea. But the idea simply anticipates the actual process in an unexplained form, and you have therefore offered in fact no explanation at all. For it is will, you say in effect, when with will we have the idea of it beforehand.' But such an objection need, I think, not cause any serious

another. The perception will contain something like 'fighting there', and this, in becoming a suggestion, sheds the 'there', and in the action is perceived as 'fighting here' or 'me fighting'. At a still lower stage the 'here' and 'there' become even less specified, but, as long as we can speak of will at all, there is an incompatible adjective which is opposed to existence and which in this sense is an idea.

embarrassment. We do not in the first place admit that my self as acting must in fact be contained in the idea. And even if we admitted this, the conclusion which would follow really matters very little. For the conclusion which would follow amounts merely to this, that my perception of agency must come before volition in the proper sense of that term. This priority would, however, make little or no difference to our main result. The idea of a changed existence is suggested, is felt as one with me, and so carries itself out. And this process gives me, as we laid down, the experience of my agency; but the process so far, on the present hypothesis, would not amount in the strict sense to volition. On another occasion, however, this perception of my agency, which now is acquired, will or may be transferred to the idea as an element in its content. And the result will now follow from an idea which has been qualified as required, and the act will therefore now have become a volition proper. Hence, even if we accept a view which I submit is mistaken in fact, the alleged circle in our account is really non-existent or harmless.

In volition I must have, and must be conscious of, an object not-self, and I must be conscious again of an object idea. With that idea I must feel myself in a special sense to be one, and the idea must be qualified in its content by its relation to the not-self. Then, when the idea realizes itself, I perceive myself also as moving in the same sense, and up to a certain point in this movement I am an object to myself. And my self again in many cases, before the idea has even partly realized itself, is contained as an element in the content of the idea. But at the beginning of the act my self is not always so contained. And after a certain point the process, we have seen, may wholly pass beyond my knowledge and being.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We may ask whether the idea, *before* it realizes itself, need even be the idea of *my* future state. The idea must be felt inwardly as mine, and it must qualify the not-self which comes to me and which so far qualifies me. The idea must thus in its content be the idea of a change in me. But if you ask whether the idea is that of a change in myself as distinct from others, the question is different. The doubt is whether a change of my not-self, even where my not-self is in felt opposition to an idea felt as mine,

Then is the idea of agency, I may be asked, not essential to will? This idea in my opinion is present usually, but I do not think that it is essential, and I even think that in some cases of will it is absent. We always experience the process, when it happens, as our agency; but, before the process happens, agency is not a necessary element in the idea. In other words, the idea of an altered not-self, I think, is enough, even if that idea does not contain the feature of an active altering. Let us suppose that at an early stage my self in some point has been expanded into the not-self, and let us suppose that, without experiencing this process as an act, I have perceived it as a change in which my self has flowed over into the not-self. Let us again suppose that later this same change is suggested in idea, and that myself is felt as identified with this ideal change. The process which follows and realizes this idea will be experienced as my agency,<sup>1</sup> and this process, I submit, is also an act of volition. On the other hand, the element of agency was not present beforehand in the idea. And if the process, being without such an element in its idea, is denied to be volition, this to myself, I would repeat, matters little or nothing. The process in any case will give at least the perception of agency, and on the next occasion that element, having now been perceived, will tend to qualify the idea.

‘But it is the perception of agency’, I may probably be told, ‘which is here really in question. Agency and the experience of it are things one or both of which are ultimate, irreducible, and unique, and in this inexplicable fact is contained the real essence of will. To make will consist in the perception or in the idea of this fact is really circular. And once more the perception like the fact is irreducible and ultimate.’<sup>2</sup> Now, to confine my reply first to the objection

must therefore be qualified in the idea as a change of myself as distinct from other persons or things. And I cannot maintain the affirmative here. But, since the idea in its actual process at once goes on to qualify itself, the inquiry, as I have explained in my text, seems to have no importance.

<sup>1</sup> It will be so experienced, that is, except under certain conditions discussed later in this article.

<sup>2</sup> I do not mean to imply that this objection as it stands would be offered all at once by the same person.

based on the perception of agency, I am not concerned here to deny that such an experience is 'original' and 'ultimate'. Whether anything in our development precedes the practical relation and, if so, what precedes it, is a matter with which I am not here undertaking to deal. But I maintain that apart from the practical relation there is no will nor any perception of agency, and I insist that in this relation certain elements are essentially involved. And where these are wanting I utterly deny the presence of an experience of agency. On the one hand I do not assert that the elements can exist apart or that they precede the relation, and on the other hand I do not even maintain that with these the whole experience is exhausted. My perceived agency will contain usually, or perhaps even always, some psychical matter which I am not here attempting to detail. But this matter in my opinion most certainly is not essential, though it may give what may be called a specific character to the experience. What is essential is the presence of those several aspects which I have repeatedly described, and, where you have not these, you have not in fact, I contend, the experience of agency. But, in calling these aspects the essential conditions of the experience, I imply no conclusion with regard to their priority in time.

I will pass from this point to consider another mode of objection. 'The experience of agency', it may be said, 'falls outside your account of it. We might on your account of the matter perhaps perceive a change happening to the not-self, and we might also perceive a change happening to ourselves, but with this we should never get to perceive ourselves as making the change.' But for my part I cannot understand how this perception could fail. I feel myself one with the idea of a changed not-self, an idea opposed to the not-self which actually exists. And as this idea invades the not-self, I feel and I perceive that my self is expanded. The change of the not-self is perceived as my process of expansion, in which both that existence and myself become in fact what ideally I was. We have a change of existence beginning with its idea in myself and itself really ending in that which was ideal. This moving idea is

felt in one with myself, and my self thus is felt and is perceived as becoming actually itself. The process is experienced as beginning from within and as going continuously outwards. And surely with this we must in fact have attained to the essence of agency.

There are fundamental difficulties, I admit, which I must here leave untouched. The perception of succession in general, and the qualification in any process of the beginning by the end, offer well-known problems which here it is impossible to discuss. And the same remark holds, we may add, of every kind of predication. But these difficulties do not attach themselves specially to the perception of agency in the self. They apply equally to the experience of any change in outward existence. And these difficulties, if so understood, furnish no ground for objection against our doctrine of will. Such an objection is not grounded unless these ultimate questions are answered in one special manner. It is possible to hold that in the self there is an agency which the self knows in that character, and that this self-conscious agency, while inexplicable itself and the essence of will, serves to explain our perception of process in things, and meets the difficulties which attach themselves to predication in general. I consider any such view to be untenable and to be in conflict with fact, but I cannot undertake the discussion of it here. Whatever plausibility it may possess comes I think from its vagueness and from its inability to realize the conclusions to which its principle would lead.<sup>1</sup> We must not confuse with such a view a doctrine which differs from it vitally. This doctrine is alike in holding agency and will to be itself inexplicable and ultimate, and to be on the other hand the main principle which explains experience. It would however deny that this principle in its working is aware of itself. Or, if aware of itself in any sense, the principle is at least not aware of itself in its own proper character. If the agency in short is a 'fact of experience', it is nevertheless not experienced in fact as an agency. Such a principle however, it may be urged, is the

<sup>1</sup> The appearance of Professor Münsterberg's interesting volume since these words were written has not inclined me to modify them.

real essence of volition. Once again it is impossible here to discuss such a doctrine, but such a doctrine may at once be dismissed as here irrelevant. For in these papers, I may remind the reader, I am merely concerned with what we experience as will. If indeed from such a principle you could account for this our actual experience, the case, I admit, would become very different. But for any satisfactory explanation on this head we should seek assuredly in vain. And we are really not concerned here even with 'a fact of experience' except so far as it either itself is an experienced fact or serves as a principle by which experienced facts are explained.<sup>1</sup>

It is better to leave an objection which, however fundamental, is far too vague to be discussed briefly, and I therefore will state in a concrete instance the former more definite argument. 'I may have a pain,' it may be objected, 'and the idea of its relief, and I may experience the tension of that idea against existence and may feel myself one with it. Then, when the idea is realized, I may experience, in and with this change of the not-self, a great expansion of my self. And yet with all this I may gain no perception of agency.'<sup>2</sup> But this is so, I reply, because the conditions are not fulfilled. The process is perceived as beginning from the not-self and as merely happening to me. Either from a general habit, or from the presence of some particular cause, the change does not come to me as starting from the idea in me. The realization of the idea on the contrary appears to begin with an independent movement of the

<sup>1</sup> I may refer here to *M.* n.s. ix and x [*E.* xxii and xxiii]. I have noticed for some years an increasing tendency in England to do what I must call to coquet with the doctrine of the 'primacy of will'. I do not, I trust, undervalue the lesson which is to be learnt perhaps most readily from Schopenhauer. But that lesson, I am sure, is much less than half learnt if we do not realize the difficulties which arise from anything like a whole-hearted acceptance of the doctrine. Professor Munsterberg's important work should here prove instructive. I hope also that Mr. Schiller's essay, contained in *Personal Idealism* (which I have seen since writing the above), may in its way be useful, though one would seek in it in vain for any serious attempt to realize the meaning and result of that gospel which it preaches.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the remarks on Expectation (*E.* xi. 481-2).



not-self, and the process therefore naturally is viewed as the process of the not-self. I have the idea of relief and yet actually the pain remains. The idea changes in strength and fullness, and generally in the way in which it occupies my self, but on the other hand the pain remains unaltered. There is therefore no acquired tendency to connect actual cessation of the pain with its idea. On the other side, not only may the pain have ceased when the idea has been absent, but it may have ceased also when some prominent change of the not-self has been present, and this experience may have happened to me more or less frequently. We have, therefore, not only the absence of any acquired tendency to connect the change with the idea, but we may have a contrary tendency to view the change as beginning from the not-self. And this order again may be in general the more familiar way of our experienced world.<sup>1</sup> If then, in any particular case of relief from pain, there is nothing to suggest specially that the process has begun from the idea, we naturally fail to experience ourselves as active. And this failure is a consequence which serves to illustrate and to confirm our doctrine.

Let us now suppose, on the other hand, that the facts are altered. Let us suppose that relief from pain comes habitually when the idea of it is present, or when that idea to a certain extent has inwardly prevailed. And let us suppose that the respective increase and decrease of the idea and of the pain are in general related inversely. Under these conditions we should tend, I submit, to view the relief as ensuing from the idea, and in the process, when it happened, we should gain a perception of our agency. The relief in fact really might arise from another unperceived cause,

<sup>1</sup> A change ensuing on, and continuously following from, motion of some object not my body tends in general to be attributed to that object and not to myself. On the other hand, the origin of motion in my body, as coming from myself and proceeding outwards, is, I presume, the main source of our experience of agency. The perception of agency in my outward world, I should agree, is transferred, but, though transferred, it may have become a more familiar and natural way of apprehension. I do not however mean by this to imply that our experience of the order of the outward world begins with such a transferred perception of agency.

and our perception of agency would in this case contain an illusion—the same illusion which on one view makes the essence of all experience of will. But whether illusory or otherwise, the perception, I contend, would arise from these conditions, in the absence, that is, of other conditions which are hostile. If a suggestion is made to me that relief from pain comes from the idea, if this suggestion is not qualified in my mind by anything alien or foreign, but remains with me as a simple connexion of my ideas,<sup>1</sup> if then in the presence of the pain I have the idea of its relief, and the idea is realized in the actual cessation of the pain—under these conditions I shall experience agency and will. The experience may be illusory, we have seen, but that point is irrelevant or, so far as relevant, it is not an argument against our view. For we are asking merely as to the elements which are essential to our experience of agency.<sup>2</sup>

We have so far supposed as one of our conditions a special acquired tendency, a disposition, that is, to join the

<sup>1</sup> This proviso must be emphasized. If there is anything about the idea which makes it other than my idea simply, the act will so far not be experienced as my will. See the preceding article [*E.* xxvi].

<sup>2</sup> An unbiased inquiry into the conditions under which we get an experience of activity and passivity is a thing which, so far as my knowledge goes, is sorely wanted. I cannot think it satisfactory that two competent psychologists should in the case of some psychical process be clear, one that the experience of activity is there, and the other that it is not there. I cannot myself approve when I see such a difference end apparently with two assertions. But for myself, even if I were otherwise fitted to undertake this inquiry, it is plain that I could not be regarded as unbiased. In the main, however, and subject to some necessary explanation which is given below in this article, I find that the presence of the experience depends on an idea. If, for instance, my imagination is excited and I perhaps desire to sleep, I can view myself at pleasure as freely active in my imagination, or again as passive and constrained by the activity of a foreign power. And, as I view myself, so also I perceive and I feel myself. Similarly in a carriage or in a train I can regard and can perceive the movement as my act, or again as an alien force that actively sweeps me away either as merely passive or as unwilling. And I can even mix both experiences and can feel that it is at once my act and is also my fate which is taking me in each case to its end. The whole matter, I submit, is one for an unprejudiced inquiry, and I will venture once again, not without hope, to recommend this conclusion. Cf. *A.R.* 547 = 605.

relief with the idea as following after it in time. But such a particular connexion I think is hardly required. In any particular case a present emphasis may have the same effect as repetition and past conjunction. If, that is, the idea of relief is first opposed to the actual pain and is then realized, and if this experience throughout is prominent and is felt emphatically, we might, even in the absence of an acquired connexion between the relief and the pain, experience the process as our agency and will. I assume of course that there is nothing in the case to suggest the activity of the not-self. But it is not worth while to insist on a point which perhaps bears but little on our general doctrine. The reader will have understood generally that I am not offering an account of our psychical development, nor on the other side am I attempting an exhaustive analysis of the facts. There are psychical features, I would repeat, in our experience of agency, which, because I think them unessential, have been omitted altogether. And in the development of this experience the changes of my body, felt and later perceived in their felt unity with myself, are obviously a factor of primary importance. But our inquiry here must be limited to points which seem essential to the definition of will.

Before I pass from the subject of our experienced agency I must direct the attention of the reader to a remaining difficulty. Wherever you experience agency in the proper sense, there you have the experience of volition. Hence, if anywhere you perceived yourself as an agent in the absence of conditions which we have defined as essential to will, such a fact clearly would destroy our definition. Now, if we make no distinction between an awareness of activity and of agency, a contradiction of this kind is likely to arise, and I must therefore offer at once a brief explanation on this point. The question is, however, too fundamental to be discussed here in an adequate manner.

I will begin by noticing a doubt which may be forthwith dismissed. It might be contended that for an experience of activity and passivity it is not necessary to be aware

of an other or not-self. But, when the not-self is understood so as to include my existence, so far as that existence is opposed to my idea, an objection of this kind at once loses plausibility.<sup>1</sup> We may therefore, leaving this, return at once to the more serious difficulty. If there is no difference in my experience between activity and agency proper, and if my experience of activity is possible without the presence of an idea of change, then it will not be true that an idea is essential to volition. And I will now proceed to draw out and to explain this objection. 'Even when idea is understood', it may be urged, 'as you have understood it,'<sup>2</sup> I may perceive myself as active where no such idea can be found, or at least where no such idea carries itself out in existence. For I may perceive my self as it expands against and into the not-self, or again as it is contracted when the not-self advances into me. And this expansion or contraction may be experienced as my activity or passivity, without the presence in either case of any idea which realizes itself. If my self is written as AB and the not-self as CD, we may perhaps at first write their experienced relation as AB | CD.<sup>3</sup> Let us now suppose that this experience is changed to ABC | D, and that the process of this change, of myself from AB to ABC and of the not-self from CD to D, is perceived by me. And let us suppose also that there is no suggestion of this change having arisen from the not-self. In this case I become aware of myself as changing outwards from a narrower to a wider self, a self that has

<sup>1</sup> On this point see above, p. 521.      <sup>2</sup> *E.* xxiii. 391, and xxvi. 503-6.

<sup>3</sup> These symbols, of course, are miserably inadequate and may even mislead. I however offer them to the reader who is prepared to make the best of them. The vertical line which divides these groups of letters is of course not to be understood as distinguishing in the ordinary sense 'subject' from 'object'. The division holds merely within the content which is experienced in my whole self, and it is meant to distinguish those features in the object-world, which oppose and limit me, from the rest of my world, whether object or not, with which in feeling I am one. If we suppose a part of my body, which for the moment is out of gear and so prevents my ordinary feeling and perception of self, and if we then suppose that this restriction of myself is removed, such an example may perhaps explain the general sense of our symbols. Unfortunately, with the restriction and enlargement there goes also a qualitative change.

become more than what it was, and has become this at the expense of the not-self. The process into the not-self, if so, is referred to myself as a further quality; and experienced pleasure, though not essential, would contribute to my so taking it. There is here on the one side no foregoing idea which carries itself out, but on the other side there arises a perception of myself as active. So in the same manner my experience may change from  $AB \mid CD$  to  $A \mid BCD$ , this change being perceived as the invasion of me by the not-self. And here once again there will be no idea which realizes itself in the result. Hence without any such idea we have the perception both of passivity and of activity, and it therefore is false that without an idea there is no experienced agency or will.'

I can identify myself largely with this objection, but I cannot endorse it altogether. I do not think that in the absence of an idea I could possibly attain to the experience of agency. I should not under the described conditions either perceive myself as doing something or as having something done to myself. But if activity and passivity are used in a lower sense which stops short of agency, then under the above conditions I might be aware of myself as active or passive. And I should not myself object to the use of activity and of passivity in such a lower sense, at least so long as confusion is avoided. My perceived self-expandedness in what before was the not-self may thus, unless for some further reason the process is taken as beginning from the not-self, be regarded as the perception of my activity. And on the other side my self-contractedness, when my self is seen to become in part the not-self, may be an awareness of passivity; so long, that is, as the result is not made to appear as beginning from my self. And in neither case will such an experience involve an idea—an idea, I mean, which carries itself out in the result. But such a lower activity, whether on the side of my self or of the not-self, must be clearly understood not to amount to agency. It is not agency at all, that is, so long as it remains simply in its own character. On the other hand, it tends naturally to pass beyond itself and to become the

experience of agency by a process of construction. And, since this tendency serves to obscure the distinction, I will ask the reader to pause and to consider its nature. The subject of the experience has perceived in fact merely his own expansion into the not-self or, on the other hand, the inroad of the not-self into his being. The process so far begins from one side of the relation, and in that character is regarded as belonging to that side. And with so much, I would repeat, we have not the perception of agency, since the process is not viewed as coming out of that which in its result it qualifies. But it is natural for the subject himself, or again for an outside observer, to make the addition wanted to produce the perception of agency. The result is transferred in idea from the end to the beginning, and qualifies that beginning as an element which lay within it and issues from it. And with this we now have agency and will in that character which our definition has ascribed to it. The above construction may be erroneous and may more or less misinterpret the facts, but at least in the subject of the experience it may develop itself into an actual perception. What was first perceived was in fact no more than a self-expandedness, and it is the presence of the idea by which it has now become a perceived self-realization and agency.

It may be instructive to dwell for a time on the above sense of activity and passivity, a sense in which as yet they do not imply agency and will. We must distinguish this again from feelings which, whether in idea or in actual time, are anterior to perception, and which in any case do not pass beyond their own lower level. These feelings of activity and of passivity of course exist at all stages of our development, and in some sense each, I should say, precedes its respective perception. But neither is in itself an experience of passivity or activity, if this means that, confined to them, we could be said to have any knowledge of either. Our first perception of activity or passivity goes beyond and is distinct from such feelings. It gives us the knowledge of something in the character of being active or passive, though this something is not yet qualified on

either side by agency. I perceive myself first as passive when a change in myself is referred to the not-self as its process, when, that is, I become different and the object not-self becomes different, and the alteration is perceived as the increase of the not-self in me. This experience does not imply so far my practical relation to the object in the sense of my striving against its invasion. And again it does not imply agency on the part of the object. That agency and my struggle, I repeat, may perhaps in fact exist, but they are not contained so far as such within my experience. And I have feelings and those feelings may more or less qualify the not-self, but, once more, not so as to produce a perception of agency. We may find an illustration in my state as theoretical or perceptive. Where knowledge develops itself in me without effort or friction, my experience even here is very far from being simple. But my attitude, so far as I tranquilly receive the object's development, and so far again as that development is not viewed as its agency, is an example of what we mean by simple passivity.<sup>1</sup>

And we have a perception of activity which remains on the same level. In this, as we saw, I perceive my self to be enlarged at the expense of the not-self. But whatever feeling may accompany and may qualify this process, I do not perceive the not-self as striving or myself upon the other side as doing something to this not-self. Thus, in my theoretic attitude again, the unknown existence is beyond me as a not-self, and my knowledge of it can come to me as an expansion of myself at its cost. And yet my attitude so far involves no experience of resistance or of agency. We found another instance in what I may perceive on relief from a pain, although the cessation of the pain is not viewed as my doing. And we saw that activity and passivity in this lower sense are turned by a small addition into that which implies agency and will.<sup>2</sup> This addition in each case

<sup>1</sup> I refer to that state of mind in which the object comes to me as something which *is*, without my feeling at the time that it is *doing* anything to me, or I to it or again to myself.

<sup>2</sup> If we imagine a dog beginning to run, we may suppose that with this he gets at once a perception of activity (cf. *A.R.* 548 = 606). His experience,

consists in an idea of the result, an idea which, going before, carries itself out in the process.

These subtleties, however wearisome, cannot I think be safely neglected. We have often what may be called an awareness at once of both activity and passivity; but to take the two always here in the same sense and as exactly correlative might involve us in confusion and in serious difficulty. The practical attitude, we saw, involves in itself the attitude of theory, and without the perception of an object no will is possible. Now as receptive of such a not-self I have a sense of passivity, and we may regard this sense as in some degree present in will. But in will to take this perceived passivity together with our perceived agency, as at one and the same level of meaning, would not be defensible. It would be a mistake which might lead us to dangerous results.

Before I pass from this subject I must return to a final difficulty. 'It is impossible', I may be told, 'anywhere to understand activity in a lower sense, for activity and passivity are inseparable from agency both in fact and in idea. The distinction of self from not-self depends on the full practical relation, and apart from this relation there is neither in idea nor in time the possibility of an experience of anything lower.' This is an objection which obviously goes too far to be discussed in these pages, but I can at once make a reply which I consider to be here sufficient. The reader is at liberty to assume here for the sake of argument that our experienced distinction of self from not-self comes into existence with and in the experience of agency and will. I could not myself admit that before this distinction there is no experience at all. But for the sake of argu-

however, at first need not amount to agency proper. But the perceived expansion of self into the not-self will tend naturally to become an idea, and that idea of the result will tend to precede and to qualify beforehand the process. And, with such a self-developing idea of a changed not-self, the dog would have forthwith the experience of agency. The same ideal construction can of course be also made from the outside by a spectator, and can then be attributed, perhaps falsely, to the actual subject of the process. In the passage of my book to which I have just referred I have not distinguished between the two senses of activity referred to above.



ment I will admit that the practical relation, with its experience of agency, is the beginning of that consciousness which distinguishes not-self from self. Such an admission, I would however add, agrees perfectly with our doctrine. The practical relation still maintains that character on which we have insisted, and it involves always the self-realizing idea of a change. On the other hand we find in fact a lower perception of activity and passivity, just as in fact we still must find our theoretical experience and attitude. And such a consequence need entail no confusion or discrepancy. The practical relation, together with experienced agency, will be there from the first, and will remain the condition of our experience of any relation between self and not-self. But lower experiences of that relation may none the less actually be present. They will be present either as degraded forms of the practical relation, where one or more of its aspects have vanished in fact; or they will exist within the practical relation as dependent and subordinate features of that inclusive whole. In the latter case they will be abstractions on which our attention and our one-sided emphasis bestows the appearance of a separate existence. But this is a point with which for our present purpose we are not further concerned. And when this reply, together with what precedes it, is fairly considered, the objection to the use of activity in a lower sense may, I hope, be removed. And it will be impossible from this ground to argue against the presence of a self-realizing idea in our experience of agency.

I will end our inquiry into this difficult point by reminding the reader that in one sense I attach to it no great value. We have, I think, a natural tendency to make use of activity and of passivity in cases where the experience of agency is absent. And for myself I am ready to permit within limits and to justify this use, but on the other side I am also ready to condemn and to disallow it. But in the latter case, if we may not distinguish between activity and agency, we must at least distinguish both from a lower experience. There will be an experience, such as we have described, which falls short of agency, and which, if it is

not to be called active and passive, must at least in some way be recognized. This lower experience, if left unrecognized in fact, becomes a dangerous source of confusion and mistake; but on the other hand the name which we are to apply to it is a matter of secondary concern.

We have now discussed the sense in which the self in will is identified with an idea, and in connexion with this have inquired into our experience of activity and agency, and we have asked how far these two should be regarded as distinct. Our space has been too short for a satisfactory treatment of such problems, even if otherwise such a treatment were within my power. There remain various questions with regard to the practical relation and its opposition of the not-self to the idea and to the self. I can however do no more here than notice some points in passing.

(i) In the first place this opposition is, I should say, in no case motionless and fixed. The idea, if it does not at once realize itself, will ebb and flow, and, as against the not-self, will at its boundary more or less waver. There will be a constant movement, however slight, of passing forward into fact and of again falling back. (ii) The opposition of the not-self may again be so transitory and so weak that it fails to give us in the proper sense an awareness of resistance. The existence to be changed by the idea may be more or less isolated. It may find little support in any connexions with the self and the world, and its strength may be said to consist in its own psychical inertia.<sup>1</sup> And the extent of the existence and the inertia may be inconsiderable. In other words, the resistance to some special change may be no more than a resistance to change in general. But this resistance, it is clear, may in some cases amount to very little. (iii) We may have in volition a forecast and an expectation of the result, and this may be strong and may be definite in various degrees. And in some cases its strength and detail may tend to overpower the actual fact. The idea may, before the act, so prevail against the perceived existence as in part to suppress my experience of

<sup>1</sup> I shall return to the subject of inertia in my next article.

activity against an opposing not-self. I do not mean that this experience can in will be wholly suppressed, but it may be reduced in some cases to an amount which is hardly noticeable. In brief, within the act of volition our experience is both complex and variable, and to try to enter on these variations would be a lengthy task. But everywhere the main essence of volition remains one and the same, and that essence, I venture to think, has been described by us correctly.

In the next article I shall discuss the alleged plurality of typical volitions, and shall briefly deal with errors which prevail on the subject of aversion. Then, after disposing of some minor points, I shall finally inquire how and by what means the idea comes to realize itself in fact.

## XXVIII

### THE DEFINITION OF WILL (III)

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**I**N some preceding articles I have defined will as 'the self-realization of an idea with which the self is identified', and I have endeavoured to explain and to justify this account. I have hitherto assumed the fact of what is called 'ideo-motor action', and I have still to show that the assumption is warranted. But before I proceed to this last part of my subject, I must attempt to deal with several remaining difficulties.

The first of these is the question as to a plurality of volitional types.<sup>1</sup> There is a variety, it has been urged, of unique typical volitions, and each of these cases in the end is said to be irreducible and ultimate. Will may be negative, or imperative, or hypothetical, or disjunctive; and such types, it is added, will not conform to the general account which we have given. Our best reply to this objection will be to exhibit briefly the true nature of these different types. We shall in this way reach the conclusion that in every case our definition is confirmed. Certainly these types are irreducible in the sense that, before they were experienced, you could not in advance have anticipated their character. But everywhere, so far as they are volitions, they consist in the self-realization of an idea, and the main question is as to the exact nature of the idea in each case. The types of will differ, in short, because in each type I will to do something different. The difference, in other words, lies in the diversity of the various ends, and this diversity will in each case be found to consist in the varying content of the idea which realizes itself.

(a) We may begin with a short account of 'imperative' volition. In a true imperative I will the production of a

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Shand (*M. N.S. vi. 289-325*) has written a very instructive article on this subject.

certain act by another, not simply, but in and through the manifestation of this my will to the other. In a true imperative the other's act must not come merely because I have willed it. It must come because I have also shown this my volition to the other, and, if the latter element disappears, there is no genuine order.<sup>1</sup> Since however this element has a constant tendency to be obscured or to vanish, it is often difficult in practice to decide if an imperative really is present. I will go on to illustrate this statement by several examples.

If, in walking with another man, I see him about to tread on some small living creature, I may will at once the prevention of this result. And I may execute my will in a number of ways. I may pull or push the person, or I may point to the object, or I may cry out 'There is something there', or 'look', or 'stop'. Now in any of these cases an imperative may be present or absent. If the manifestation of my will is included as a means in the idea of my end, we have in each of these cases a genuine imperative, and otherwise we have in no case an imperative volition. This is the principle, and all the rest is a question of fact to be decided in each case by a special observation. We may illustrate this again by what happens among some of the lower animals, where the mother is engaged in teaching her young. The tap, the push or the pull, the call or the warning sound, or the action set as an example, cannot in most cases, I presume, be regarded as orders.<sup>2</sup> They are not, in the proper sense, orders where they are done merely to produce the action of the other; for the idea of showing what is required seems essential to an imperative proper.

The instance of the sudden and instinctive imperative adduced by Mr. Shand (317) does not present us, I think, with any special difficulty. If we are to decide whether an

<sup>1</sup> I have of course always rejected the doctrine that a command must imply a threat. This fiction is as contrary to sound psychology as it is to plain fact.

<sup>2</sup> Whether the lower animals can use imperatives in the strict sense I do not here discuss. It is certain that they can behave in an imperative manner, and that this may be some evidence of their use of ideas I have long ago pointed out (*L.* 31-2 = 33).

instinctive act is in any case a volition, we have to inquire first if it is the result of a foregoing idea. And in the second place, if that idea is found and the action therefore is will, we have next to ask what precisely is contained in the idea. And according to the answer which we give to this question, we shall have to pronounce that a genuine imperative is present or absent. If I suddenly rise and ring the bell on the appearance of some danger or some want, such an 'instinctive imperative' (317) may perhaps be my willed order to a servant. But the act very probably is a volition which falls far short of this, and is no more an imperative than would be, for example, a movement to the door. And the act may possibly not even be the result of any volition at all. The whole question here is as to the presence and as to the nature of the idea, and, viewed in this way, the difficulty is reduced to a mere question about the particular fact.

In an ordinary imperative I will the real production of the act by the other, but it may be doubted if this feature belongs to the essence. The imperative consists merely, it may be said, in a willed manifestation on my part, and what lies beneath this appearance is not essential. But this is a subordinate point which we are not concerned to discuss, and, however it is decided, our main doctrine remains unaffected. And I do not think that we need dwell further here on the subject of imperative volition.<sup>1</sup>

(b) I must deal very rapidly with the alleged 'hypothetical' and 'disjunctive' types of will (Mr. Shand, *l.c.*, 296-300). I cannot admit the existence of a conditional or an imaginary volition. We have to do in such cases, I should say, with an intention or a mere resolve, and how far this is will we have discussed in a previous article (see *E.* xxvi). So far as the idea really is taken as conditional or as imaginary, it is so far not willed; but it may at the

<sup>1</sup> The reader should recall in this connexion that in one sense my will is limited to my inner self, and in another sense it extends into the outer world. See *E.* xxvi. We may, in passing, notice how the use of an internal imperative to myself is possible only where I have two selves which are taken as alien to each other. To make the whole of morality coexistent with the actual use of an imperative is therefore a most serious exaggeration.

same time be willed in another character. And for an explanation of this I must refer the reader to our former discussion. The alleged 'disjunctive will' presents us with greater difficulties, but they are difficulties which do not seem to affect our account of volition. A disjunctive will, so far as it exists, must consist in the willing of a disjunctive idea, and the main question is about the real meaning of that idea. The question is difficult, and it is not possible to enter into it here, but I will very briefly set down what to my mind seems true. In determining (to use an instance given by Mr. Shand) to go to Paris by way of Calais or Boulogne, my state of mind is a compound of actual will and of mere resolve. I will unconditionally to go to Paris, and to go by a way which falls inside the space which is covered by both routes, a way which neither falls outside of them nor again falls within both at once. And so much as this I take to be unconditional and to be actually willed. But, to complete the disjunction of 'Either-or', a further meaning is required, and this meaning cannot be reduced to anything which is called categorical. It remains conditional, and it cannot therefore be actually willed, but, at least in its proper sense, it is but the object of a mere intention or resolve. In my opinion, therefore, a disjunctive will is not fully disjunctive, or on the other hand the object is not in the full sense willed throughout. But, if such a will exists, it is the self-realization of a disjunctive idea, and it falls under our general definition of will.<sup>1</sup>

(c) Negative volition must be discussed at greater length. The whole subject of negative states and of negative functions in psychology has, so far as I know, been treated unsatisfactorily. We had to enter this field in our inquiry into mental conflict, and with regard to some points I must refer the reader to that article (*M. N.S.* xi, No. 43 = *E.* xxv). But I should like to reprint here a passage from a paper published many years ago.<sup>2</sup> The doctrine contained in it has

<sup>1</sup> The nature of Choice has been discussed in the preceding article.

<sup>2</sup> *Mind*, o.s. xiii, pp. 21-2 [*E.* xiv. 268]. In this passage more stress should have been laid on avoidance and removal, as well as on destruction, as a form of negation. And again it might perhaps have been made clearer

not, I believe, so far been noticed, but I must hope that in its present context it may have better fortune.

'I will now glance briefly at a point far too negligently handled. What is the nature of *aversion*? First the object of aversion, like the object of desire, is always an idea. We may indeed *seem* to desire the sensations that we have, but our object is really their continuance or their increase, and these are ideas. And so it is with aversion. The mere incoming of the painful is not aversion, nor is even the fear of it, if fear is confined to mere contraction or again to aimless shrinking back. To me aversion seems positive, what we call 'active dislike'. It implies a desire for negation, for avoidance or destruction. And hence its object, to speak strictly, cannot be reality, since it implies negation, and that is an idea. But desire for negation is still not aversion, until painfulness is added. The object to be negated must be felt to be painful and may also be so thought of. Aversion then is the desire for the negation of something painful. It is not a negative kind of desire over against a positive kind, and I myself could attach no meaning to a negative desire. Aversion is positive, but its true object is the negation of that which is commonly called its object—a confusion which has arisen from taking dislike to be mere negative liking. Aversion has a positive character, or it would not be desire; but its positive side is variable. There may be a definite position whose maintenance we want, as when we are averse to the injury of something we love; or again, the positive may be left blank—something, anything, is what we want if it will serve to rid us of the painful. But again we may positively desire the act of destruction, with the agencies of its process, and so depend for the pleasures of life on our aversions. I hope this brief sketch may throw light on an obscure corner of our subject, and I will, in passing, advert to another mistake. Desire and aversion have been taken to be aspects of desire, since that is tension,<sup>1</sup> and (we may add) is to that extent painful. This is mere confusion, for all aversion has an ideal object.

that I do not deny the existence of negative desire, but only of desire which is barely negative.

<sup>1</sup> Volkman, § 140; Lipps, p. 604.



Now the (painful) tension of desire is not an object at all. It may be made one, and so may give rise to an aversion. But this will clearly *not* be an aspect of the original desire, but will be a new desire supervening.'

What is negative will? It is a will to remove, to avoid, or to destroy. The idea which realizes itself in negative will is the idea of such a result. And negative will has a character of its own, which in one sense is irreducible and unique, but on the other hand most emphatically it is not co-ordinate with positive volition. It is subordinate, and is a specification of the main positive type. The idea which it realizes is never simple, but always implies, and always must imply, a positive basis and aspect. Thus the process of destruction or avoidance has an affirmative side, and without such an aspect of positive assertion all negation is meaningless. I will explain this doctrine by a defence of it against some objections.

'Your doctrine', I shall first be told, 'is contrary to fact. It would imply that with the negation of a particular A we have always a positive idea B, an idea which itself is particular and is co-ordinate with A. In other words, there would be no denying except on the basis of an explicit alternative between particulars. And any assumption of this kind would be contrary to fact.' But no such assumption, I reply, is involved in our doctrine. For the positive side of destruction or escape may remain unspecified and general, and certainly need not take the shape of a co-ordinate particular. In negative will, we may say, the affirmative is usually not specified. And to argue, 'Either no idea at all or an idea that is particular', would surely everywhere, and not only here, conduct us to ruin. On the contrary, I in fact may deny this or that without the actual assertion of any particular opposite. On the one hand, that which is to be removed must be specified always; but the positive aspect of the removal, although necessary, may be utterly vague. The thing in short is understood to be done somehow, but the positive 'how' is left blank.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is in my opinion a mistake to hold that every positive term without exception must have a co-ordinate negative, and in the end this mistake

We may pass from this to an objection of a different kind. 'We can have negative will,' it may be said, 'where no idea at all is present; and this happens where we reject an offered suggestion and again where we disapprove.' But I find in these cases no special difficulty, except in discovering the precise fact which is offered. If, on its appearance, a suggestion is banished either because somehow it is incompatible, or again because it is incompatible with some known mental group, it seems absurd to offer such a fact as a case of volition. If the exclusion is simple we have surely so far no semblance of will.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if the suggestion, not being banished at once, is recognized as incompatible with a certain principle, and if the idea of the suggestion's banishment is excited and qualifies the principle—then I agree that the ensuing result may be a negative volition. But the nature of this volition now completely agrees with our definition of will. And the further instance of disapproval will certainly not shake us. For on the one side a disapproval is not in itself a volition, and on the other side it in no case is present without an idea. I will venture first to call attention to this latter point. The mere fact of a suggestion being in painful conflict with something either unspecified or again definite, even if this conflict results in the suggestion's banishment, does not by itself constitute a genuine disapproval. For, in order to disapprove, you must judge and must not simply eject, and you cannot judge unless you qualify your object by an idea. There must be a principle would have a ruinous result. As to negative will Mr. Shand (pp. 292 foll.) appears to me to assume without inquiry that the alternative, 'Either a particular positive idea or none', is a sound one. He does not state whether he everywhere rejects unspecified ideas, and he does not explain how we are able to do without them, and how, for instance, we are to understand, say, the idea of an absence. I cannot agree with Mr. Shand that the psychology of negation has been injured by the transference from logic of ideas which there are true, but are inapplicable in psychology. I should say on the contrary that it is neglect of logic and mistakes in logic which have here injured psychology.

<sup>1</sup> There is here, we may say, no experience of agency proper, though there may be perhaps in a lower sense an experience of activity. See *M. n.s.* xii [*E. xxvii*].

or standard, however vague, with which the self feels itself one, and that of which you disapprove must be qualified by the idea of discrepancy with this standard.<sup>1</sup> Thus a simple inhibition or rejection may be a higher thing morally than the most explicit disapproval, but, considered psychically, it will stand always at a lower level. But in any case, to return to this, a disapproval is in itself no volition. I may have the idea of a principle in myself and its rejection of something which is offered, and I may feel myself one with this whole idea and may judge accordingly and so disapprove. But unless I have the idea of a change in immediate existence, and unless that idea carries itself out into the facts, however much I have disapproved, I have not actually willed.

An alleged negative volition, we have seen, is either not genuine will, and, when scrutinized, at once ceases to appear in that character, or else, if real, it does but specify our general account. It is a type which falls under and which confirms our definition of will. And we need, I think, consider no further these alleged types of independent volition. We have found that in every case, so far as it is a case of real will, we have an idea which carries itself out into fact. And the inability to verify the presence of this idea has, we saw, been due mainly to a failure to apprehend it in its proper character.

I will add some further remarks on aversion in its relation to positive desire. The extract given above contains, I believe, the main truth on this subject, but I will endeavour in certain points to confirm and to illustrate its doctrine. Aversion and positive desire certainly are not co-ordinate, any more than are denial and assertion in logic. And it is not difficult to show how the mistaken view about aversion has arisen; but I will first endeavour to remove some misunderstandings.

'All desire', it may be said, 'is and must be for change, and therefore all desire is negative; and on one side it must

<sup>1</sup> We saw in *M.* n.s. xi. 25 [*E.* xxiv. 436] that for this reason your disapproval may serve to retain the suggestion.

therefore consist in aversion.' But the premise from which this conclusion seems to follow is ambiguous. Desire is certainly for something which is not present, and it is a desire therefore for something else, and this naturally implies an alteration, and so in some respect a negation, of that which is. But in desire this negation is incidental, or at the very most is subordinate, while in aversion it constitutes the main and principal end. And 'change', we must remember, is a more or less equivocal phrase. A thing is changed by a subtraction which removes its positive character, but it is changed also by the mere addition to it of something positive; for the thing so loses the character which it had before, while it was not yet increased. If, for instance, I possess two sixpences, my condition is changed if you take away one, and my condition also is changed if, on the other hand, you give me a third. And if, having already two sixpences, I desire a sixpence, my desire implies incidentally the negation of the first two as two only. But you can hardly take this negation to be in all cases an actual constituent of my positive desire, and, even where it is present, you can hardly make it co-ordinate with my positive end. For I may have desired the third sixpence without any thought of or any reference to the first two, and, even if I desire to add to these, I obviously do not desire to remove them. Their change, so far as it is negative, cannot in short be regarded as my main object. It is an incidental result which is either not present in my end, or, if present there, has clearly a subordinate character. But in aversion the mere negation of what I change is my principal end, and any positive aspect of this main end is subordinate or even quite unconsidered. Positive desire, we may say, is for a specified something, and this implies the negation of some aspect of the world; but the aspect thus to be destroyed need not in desire be either specified or considered. But the aversion to something contains essentially and explicitly a destructive change of that something, at least in some aspect, while on the other hand the positive attendant or result of this negation need not be specified or even in any way considered.

Without refinements we may perhaps put the matter as follows. The negation in positive desire need be no more than indirect and incidental, and, even where it appears in the main end, it appears as subordinate. And in positive desire the negation need be neither specified nor considered. But in aversion it is the positive side which need be neither considered nor specified, and in any case that positive side is secondary and is not the main object. We shall realize this if we consider some instance of aversion such as the game-keeper's pursuit and destruction of vermin. This process of course has its positive side, and in this positive side the man may take pride and delight, and it is possible even that he may wish for no better employment. But with this we are concerned no longer with a simple aversion. We have a mixed state in which the aversion more and more is outbalanced. And by an increase of emphasis on the positive side, and by a subordination to that of the mere negative aspect, the aversion in the end might even become transformed wholly and lost. Once find a pleasure in the pursuit of an animal, however noxious, and more or less, according to the conditions, it tends to lose its character as an object of aversion.

We can now dispose of a difficulty which may seem to arise from the difference in the relations of aversion and desire to existence. The object of aversion, we may be told, must exist, while the object never exists in the case of desire. You cannot, in other words, desire that which is actual, while you can be averse to it. But there is a dangerous confusion here as to the meaning of 'object'. The object may mean either the existing not-self which is before me, or it may mean on the other hand my ideal end. Now in no case can my idea itself be something which actually exists; and on the other side, both in desire and in aversion alike, there is opposed to my idea something which I represent to myself as actually existing. This opposition of idea to fact holds even where the fact is imaginary. I can thus be averse to a calamity though I do not really expect it,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am forced in this and some other points to dissent from Waitz, *Lehrbuch*, p. 444, by whose remarks I have however profited.

and I cannot desire to eat an imaginary apple unless for the moment, and as against the idea of eating, I regard it as actual. And there is no difference so far in principle between desire and aversion. They differ in principle through the diversity of that relation to existence which is not external, but is contained within their respective ideal ends. And it is contained, we must remember, in one case explicitly, and in the other case more or less by way of implication. Thus the negation of something taken to exist is the main end of aversion, while the appearance in existence of something positive is the main end of desire. And the further alteration of existence by this positive addition may be a result which in desire, we have seen, is not even considered. In any case, however, where negation is contemplated in desire, that negation is subordinate to the positive aspect. But it would hardly repay us, I think, to enlarge further on this head.<sup>1</sup>

The mistaken co-ordination of aversion with desire has arisen, I presume, in several ways. It has been helped perhaps by the confusion which we have just briefly noticed, and it is connected certainly with logical errors as to predication. But the mistake has come perhaps mainly from a natural but misleading parallel, and by a transference to aversion and desire of the opposition between pleasure and pain. Unless we separate pain from unpleasantness,

<sup>1</sup> Since this article was written I have made acquaintance with Dr. Pfänder's thoughtful essay, *Phänomenologie des Wollens*. Dr. Pfänder there (p. 71) criticizes the doctrine that aversion has a negatively determined end. He has however, I do not know why, understood negation here as bare privation or absence; and certainly, so understood, the doctrine he criticizes becomes untenable. In the presence of a painful noise, e.g., I may desire its absence, but that desire is not, as such, an aversion. It is not the mere absence, but it is the positive suppression or avoidance of what annoys me, that is really desired in aversion. Dr. Pfänder appears to me to be confused on this head, or to be dealing with some confused statement to which he does not refer. Again, pp. 109-111, he objects that a negative will may be a will for a bare not-doing. But unless my idea changes something which otherwise would be and is therefore taken to exist, I must insist that we have not a real case of volition at all. See *M. N.S.* xi. 440 [*E.* xxvi. 479-80]. And, again, the will to produce a state of privation is, as such, a positive and not a negative volition.

pleasure and pain are on one level. They stand to each other, we may say, as co-ordinate opposites. And since doubtless aversion has more to do with pain, and desire more to do with pleasure, one is led to assume that the relation between each pair is the same. And since from this there follows a variety of mistaken results, I must state briefly the connexion of pleasure and pain with desire and aversion.

In both desire and aversion, if we do not distinguish between pain and unpleasantness, we must to some extent have the presence of both pleasure and pain. The idea of the end must in positive desire be felt to be pleasant, and the same thing to a less degree will hold good in aversion. In both alike the whole state may, according to the conditions, be either pleasant or painful, though the latter case will more often be found to exist in aversion. But, since both are complex, we may have in each a preponderance of either pleasure or pain. In aversion the felt hostility of existence to the idea will be painful, but this same feature must appear also in positive desire. In both the felt tension of idea against existence will not fail to produce uneasiness, however slight that may be and on the whole outweighed. And thus the distinction, so far, may be said to consist merely in degree; but we must from this go on to take account of a further difference. In positive desire the idea of pleasure does not always qualify the object. In desire, that is, I must indeed always feel pleasure in the idea, but pleasure may either enter or not enter into the content of the end, and its entrance, where it enters, does not belong to the essence of desire. But in aversion, while in the same way to some extent I must with my idea feel some pleasure, on the other hand the internal content of my idea must be qualified by pain. Unless the painfulness of the object, upon which the process of negation is to fall, enters itself beforehand as an idea into my idea of this process, I cannot think that in the proper sense we have an aversion. We may again contrast here the desire to kill an animal for sport with the desire by any means to destroy noxious vermin. In the first of these cases we

have plainly no aversion. You cannot desire the mere negation of a thing unless that thing comes before your mind as injurious and painful. For the positive side of such a mere negation is not specified except as the removal of that object to which we are averse. And, unless the object were painful, its blank removal could not, so far as I see, be desired. On the other hand, if the special process of negation is itself directly desired, we are to that extent not concerned with a pure aversion. Thus in all aversion the positive aspect of removal must be desired; while on the other side no aversion is pure unless the means of removal are desired, not in their own character but merely as means.

Aversion and positive desire are thus in principle distinct. But in each the complication of pain and pleasure may be great, and there is a tendency in each to transform itself and to pass into the other. In many cases we find them existing side by side in a mixed state, while in other cases coexistence gives way to more or less complete subordination. But a desire or an aversion, where completely subordinate, has ceased, we must remember, to exist as an actual aversion or desire.

This last remark has a wide and important bearing (*E.* xxv) and it leads us here to the discussion of a well-known question. Can I will that to which, while willing it, I have an actual aversion? If the doctrine laid down in the article just referred to is sound, a volition of this kind will be clearly impossible. Given an actual aversion, you would have an idea which conflicts with the idea implied in your will, and you would as a result have no action or, if an action, no will. If, on the other hand, your positive idea has prevailed over your aversion, the aversion has been banished or else made subordinate. But in the latter case it has been modified and has ceased to be an actual aversion. The will to do what I hate, although I hate it, must imply that in some sense my hatred is changed. The negation has been turned into an element within a complex positive idea. The aversion has lost its independence, and, however painful, it is no longer an actual aversion. I am still 'averse' in this sense that a mass of hostile feeling



remains, and this mass struggles, perhaps violently, against the realization of my positive idea, and it tends constantly to restore the independence of its own idea. But, so long as its idea does not break loose but is held as subordinate, there cannot in fact be an actual aversion. And in the same way, though desirous, I may fail to have an actual desire.

I shall soon return to this distinction between an aversion and a mere condition of averseness, but at present must remark further on the coexistence of aversion and will. The statement that I cannot desire and will that to which I am at the same time averse is seen, when compared with facts, to be clearly erroneous. The mistake arises partly from neglect of the distinction which we have just made, but it is mainly due perhaps to a failure in observation. The great complexity of aspects contained in aversion and desire, and the presence in each of elements, pleasurable and painful, which come from a variety of sources, is often not noticed. We have seen that a desire, when considered as a whole, may be painful, just as an aversion, when it is taken on the whole, may be pleasant. We may instance the desire of a mother to save her child when she fears that she cannot, and again the pleasure of destroying what we hate where there is not too much trouble or danger. And hence, though I can will that to which I am averse without also desiring it, I certainly on the other hand may desire it and desire it eagerly. The alternative which by itself excites our repulsion may, as an escape from the intolerable, be desired and may even be regarded with complacency. And we may be aware of this pleasure, or again, because the pleasure is outweighed by pain, we may, despite the actual fact, deny its existence. But I cannot here enter further into the detail of these complicated states.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *E.* xxv and *E.* xiv. 263. Mr. Shand (pp. 324-5) rejects the view stated in the text, but I must be allowed to doubt his having apprehended it rightly. He apparently fails generally to see how in desire pain and pleasure are mixed. An example of desire for a painful alternative is found in Claudio's mood of 'flowery tenderness' for death. And in De Goncourt's

I will now return to the distinction which we noted in passing. We may be desirous or averse although we have not an actual desire or aversion, and in the same way we can have a standing or permanent will to do something when the corresponding volition is plainly absent. I have had to refer to this point in a former article (*M. N.S.* xi. 26 = *E.* xxiv. 438) and a very brief statement here will, I think, be sufficient.

A state of desire or aversion, where the actual aversion or desire is not present, has two meanings, and these different senses may be conjoined or used separately. In the first sense I have a group of feelings, perceptions, and perhaps movements, such as belong to the actual aversion or desire, but, when taken by themselves, are incomplete and stop short of it. This group continually tends to produce the complete and actual state, and it may therefore be called its conditional presence. But even in the absence of such a group we may be said still to desire or dislike, if it is understood that, given the object, we should certainly assume that attitude towards it. And we may speak in the same sense of a will which is standing or permanent. We may mean by this the constant presence of actual feelings and ideas, such as go to make, let us say, a volition to injure, and such as, given the occasion, would actually produce the volition. And we have so far an habitual mood of a certain character. But again by a standing will we may signify no more than a general disposition to injure. Whatever may be in fact my present mood, and whatever may be the ideas and feelings which are now actually in my mind, I should, without regard to this, under certain conditions have a volition to injure. And since these conditions

*Germinie*, p. 15, we hear of 'une attente de la mort qui devenait à la fin une impatience de mourir'. The defect in Mr. Shand's account becomes visible from another side, when he fails to see that an act done from mere principle tends naturally to become an act done from desire (pp. 323-4). The pain caused by injury to the principle must tend to produce a desire for relief. I think that, if Mr. Shand generally had done more justice to the actual facts, he would have felt less need to betake himself to something inexplicable behind them. But, however that may be, his articles have not failed to throw light on the subject.

may be expected to occur in fact, my will to injure is taken already in some sense to exist. We noticed formerly the same use in the case of attention (*ibid.*). I may be 'attending' to a business although no actual attention is present. I am or I have something which on the occasion would turn to attention. And so, since I have all the attention which is at present required for my purpose, you may say that I attend really although no attention is there. In these cases we use a licence which not unfrequently degenerates into error, where the standing desire or will is assumed to be really an actual will or conation. But, when a man is reposing placidly with no idea or feeling except of tranquil enjoyment, to say of him that at this moment he has an actual conation or will to take revenge on his enemy would be surely mistaken. To assert this would be at least to take an undue liberty with language.

If you ask for the ultimate nature of a permanent disposition to act, I should myself decline in psychology even to entertain such a problem. But how the standing will passes into an actual volition is a question which on the whole is not difficult to answer. Apart from the oscillations of an habitual mood, which is a matter not here to be discussed, the actual volition in the main is produced by Redintegration. Something that occurs to us has a character which falls under the law of our disposition. The character may fall under that law directly, or again indirectly and through a further principle, and the connexion again may be positive or negative. In any case the disposition in this way becomes active, and brings into fact the further element which it ideally contains. But this is a point to which we shall very soon be compelled to return.

There are a number of questions about desire which I must here leave untouched,<sup>1</sup> but I will briefly notice the relation between desire and conation. Does all desire contain, or is it all identical with, conation and striving? An affirmative answer is common, but, I think, cannot be

<sup>1</sup> For some of these see *M.* o.s. xiii [*E.* xiv].

sustained if conation is to stand for the experienced striving of my self. But conation may be used besides in two different senses (*E. xxiii*). It may signify a striving which is not as such experienced at all, or is at any rate not so experienced within myself. Or, again, it may mean a striving which is actually experienced as such within me, and yet is the striving only of some psychical element, such as a fixed idea, and is not the striving of my self. I do not however propose to take further account here of either of these senses.

If then conation is understood as the experienced striving of my self, I cannot perceive that everywhere conation is involved in desire. It may be argued that without conation desire would not have begun to exist. Want and need, however urgently experienced, are not yet desire, since they lack the idea of an object which is opposed as an end to existence. And the argument would urge that, apart from movements which in fact realize the end, the end as an idea in desire would not have come into being. And the idea of these movements will therefore, it is said, qualify the end and object of desire. And apart from these movements, if the satisfaction could ever be gained, at least the idea of it could not possibly be retained by the mind. But the presence of these movements in idea will most certainly involve a conation. And this active attitude remains, it will be further urged, through all our mental development, and everywhere will qualify the object of desire, even in a longing, say, for warmth. Thus the desired object must contain always to some extent the idea of my actively getting it, and every desire therefore will essentially involve a conation. Now I admit the force of this argument, and I agree that, speaking broadly, desire will not be separate in its origin from conation. I could not maintain that without conation it in no possible case arises; but such an origin of desire, I admit, would certainly be in fact exceptional. On the other hand I cannot argue that, if in its beginning desire depends on conation, it therefore now must involve a conation in its essence. I do not see why the ideal element of my acting for some end should not in

certain cases fall out of my idea of that end. And since in many cases I cannot discover that such an element now exists, I must reject the conclusion that in all desire a conation is involved.

And there is a counter-argument which to my mind has considerable weight. An intense desire for relief may be followed by an actual relief, and by a perception and a sense of complete satisfaction. But certainly in some cases the relief is not experienced as having been attained by my action, and, if all desire is conation, such a result seems to me hardly explicable. You may indeed contend that the experience required escapes my notice, although present in the result, just as, before the result, the conation was actual though I failed to observe it. But I prefer in each case to accept the evidence of the fact which I observe, and I must therefore deny that in all desire without exception a conation is implied. If it is to be always present it will be the conation of some psychical element not my self, or it will be the striving of something which itself does not enter into my experienced world.

I must go on from this to point out the distinctive character of Wish. Desire and wish tend naturally in fact to pass one into the other, and the distinction in language between them is at times not maintained. But this distinction exists, and it corresponds to a difference in principle, and on this point it is well to be on our guard against error.

In the first place a wish is not a striving or conation. It is, again, not the general head under which all desire falls,<sup>1</sup> nor can a desire be defined as a wish, the realization of which is judged possible. For no such judgement, we saw, is really involved in desire, nor in accordance with language can desire be taken to fall under wish. We shall find on the contrary that wish is a specialized development from desire. Further, a wish is not distinguished from a desire by its weakness. A wish, it is true, generally is inclined to be

<sup>1</sup> This untenable view is advocated by Professor Ehrenfels in his interesting study *Fühlen und Wollen*, and again in his *Werttheorie*.

weak; and, for a reason we shall point out, a wish cannot intensify itself beyond a certain degree without passing from a mere wish to become a desire. But, since desires are of all strengths, the essential difference could not lie in this point. Thus, when Professor Sully tells us (*Human Mind*, ii. 208) that wish 'marks off the *nascent* desires which are only momentary, being instantly dismissed as *futile*', I am myself unable to verify his assertion. For it seems in the first place obvious that wishes are not all momentary and instantly dismissed. And again, if wishes are taken to involve a 'nascent' desire, it is hard to see how that feature by itself is to serve as their differential character. To suppose that, wherever you have a 'nascent' and momentary desire, you have in the proper sense a wish, seems contrary to fact. And in short I do not see how Professor Sully would justify his assertions, unless through that virtue which evidently to his mind resides in such phrases as 'nascent' (see below, p. 574, note 2). To pass to another point, the difference of wish from desire does not lie in this, that in desire it is my action to which the real world is opposed, while in wish this world is contrary to something else. Desire we have seen does not in all cases coincide with conation, and again my desire for an end which is to be accomplished by another cannot possibly in all cases be termed a mere wish. The shipwrecked crew surely can be said to desire that the life-boat may reach them.

Wish is a desire which in a certain way has been specialized and limited. The idea of satisfaction has in a wish been broken from its connexion with my actual reality. The idea is disconnected, but at the same time it is retained, and its realization has been imagined in a world which is not the world of my reality. This world may according to the circumstances be more or less defined or indefinite, but it never ceases in a genuine wish to appear as imaginary. And hence the collision of the idea with fact can to a greater or less extent be suppressed. Wish is desire for an imaginary end which, because it is imaginary, can be regarded as attained. And hence a wish, so far as it is a desire which is

imagined as satisfied, has in this respect passed beyond a simple desire. But in another respect a wish remains less than desire, since the imaginary object and its fruition are recognized as out of our reach. Our wish is therefore a *mere* wish, and it is an idea which is sundered from the real order. But since this absence of relation tends to come to us in experience as a relation which is negative, a wish entails logically, and it continually in fact tends to pass into, an actual desire.

The idea in wish is separated from our world by the perceived failure of means to its realization. And the failure may come to us as general, or again as conditioned by a special obstacle either negative or positive. This obstacle may consist merely in my fear or my scruple, but, so long as it qualifies the real world, it prevents the presence of my simple desire. If then I place my desire in an imagined world where this obstacle does not hold, I have a wish. And because this other world is recognized as not actually present, my wish does not lead me to an act or an attempt.<sup>1</sup> Being in a sense satisfied beyond the reality, it is so far removed from collision with fact. But, as we have seen, in so far as it is not actually satisfied, a wish tends to collide with the world and to become a desire.

Wish arises from the retention of the idea despite our inability to give it reality. The idea is retained by the persistence of the want which remains unsatisfied and compressed. And this want, we have seen, frees itself and expands into a heaven of its own. We have in wish a sense that fruition is at once more than possible and yet less so, according as we look first on one world and then on the other. A wish is innocent, because disconnected from the actual world. It is enervating, so far as it rests in enjoyment divorced from action. It is insidious, because its idea, being actually unrealized, tends to pass into simple desire.

The passage of mere wish into desire calls for little remark. The obstacle that bars our desired end may for a

<sup>1</sup> 'I wish you to do this' is less peremptory than a simple imperative, because it is hardly unconditional. But 'I wish that you would' is of course the correct expression of a wish.

moment be hidden from our sight, or it may pass from our mind in a moment's forgetfulness. Or on the other hand some unlooked-for means of realization may show itself. In either case a tension between my idea and the actual world is set up, and the old unsatisfied want now breaks out into an actual desire. And if wish becomes intense beyond a certain point, this result is inevitable. For the ideal satisfaction becomes too shadowy, while on the other side the idea, growing dominant, suggests forcibly its own realization, even against the knowledge that this cannot be attained. When thirsty beyond a certain point a man cannot confine himself to a mere wish for water, and the unfortunate lover is condemned not to rest in mere wishes. This is the truth perverted into the doctrine that wish consists in a weak desire. But because a mere wish, if you intensify it, is transformed into a desire, you cannot conclude that a desire, if you weaken it, will through its weakness become a mere wish. For in one sense a wish, we have seen, is more special and is more complex than desire.<sup>1</sup>

We now approach a part of our inquiry which perhaps has been too long deferred, and must ask how it is that in volition the idea realizes itself. That the idea does realize itself is at least an apparent fact. And if this fact

<sup>1</sup> It will be instructive to note here the difference between wish and resolve. In the first place a wish is for a mere result and does not essentially imply agency on my part. In the second place my resolve is directed upon the real world. In resolve this real world is not the world perceived as immediately present, and in this point, we have seen, resolve is distinguished from will. On the other hand the world of resolve is not discontinuous with my world as it exists here and now. There is no breach between the two; for the present world is regarded as extending itself into the future, and the present world is contemplated as itself actually there before me in resolve, notwithstanding an interval and even perhaps a condition. And it is only because it is directed upon the real world, as in this sense actually present, that my resolve is a volition, so far as it is one. On the other side, in wish we have a world which we are aware is imaginary. This world is therefore not contemplated as the prolongation of reality, but is estranged from the real, and is sundered from it by a breach in nature. And to throw a volition across such a breach does not even suggest itself as possible. The subject of resolve has been discussed in *M. N.S.* xi, No. 44 [*E.* xxvi].



is mere appearance, then will assuredly has become an illusion. And the illusion remains an illusion, however great our success in explaining its origin. But on the other hand the belief in the existence of such an illusion rests, so far as I see, on misunderstanding and prejudice. I will here discuss this no further than once more briefly to point out what is meant generally by the action of the idea in volition. The idea is a cause of the result in which its content is realized, but it is not the sole and whole cause of that result. And if cause is to mean complete cause, you may maintain with us the reality of will, and yet may deny that your mere psychical state of the moment is the cause of what follows, or is even the cause of what follows merely on the psychical side. And still less can the idea, being psychically a mere element in your state, usurp the position of a complete cause. But the causality of the idea in will need involve no such meaning as this. The idea is a positive condition which is a genuine element in the actual cause, and it is a condition of such importance that we may fairly claim that its presence makes the difference to what happens.<sup>1</sup> And with anything less than this, I must repeat that will becomes an illusion. Even if the idea were necessary as an effect which is collateral with and so united to the result, that mere necessity would still turn will into a false appearance. For you seem once more to have denied that the idea actually goes to produce the result. And if you cannot affirm this, you cannot assert in any proper sense the existence of will.

Let us then proceed to ask in what way the idea realizes itself. We provisionally assumed the validity of ideo-motor action, but that assumption must now be allowed to drop. We must inquire, therefore, under what law or under what laws in psychology this fact of the idea's self-realization will fall. And I will begin by dismissing a view which is equally common and erroneous. A desire and a conation on this view are essential to will, and the presence of these together

<sup>1</sup> I cannot of course here enter into an inquiry into the exact nature of cause and condition positive and negative. I have already had to touch on the necessity for the idea's action in *M. N.S.* xi, No. 44 [*E.* xxvi].

with the idea explains the further result.<sup>1</sup> But if we look without prejudice at the facts no such doctrine can stand.

It is not the fact that desire and conation are to be found in all cases of will. Acts done at once from imitation or in obedience to an order, and generally acts which at once ensue from the suggestion of an idea, furnish instances which on this point seem really conclusive. No one, apart from theory, could fairly deny that of these actions at least some are volitions, or reasonably assert that in every case a desire or conation in any proper sense is present. When the sequence is delayed I admit that there is some ground for doubt. You may argue here that delay must cause necessarily a tension between the idea and existence, and that this tension must amount to conation and desire. But for myself I cannot accept even this modified conclusion. Where after delay volition follows from an unpleasant fixed idea, I cannot allow that in all such cases there is a desire or a conation of my self, and yet on the other side no one here, except to save a theory, would deny everywhere, where desire is absent, the presence of will. And where there is no delay, and where the result follows at once from the idea, the above contention, it appears to me, wholly breaks down. The existence need not be perceived in such a case as resisting the idea. On the contrary, all that is implied in such a case of volition is that the existing not-self should be felt as opposite to such an extent that its change is perceived as an alteration made by me. But this opposition need not amount to the tension involved in desire and conation. And again that felt pleasure in the idea which is certainly necessary for desire (*E. xiv.* 261-3) may be absent, it seems to me, in some cases of will. We must conclude, therefore, that conation and desire, even if usual in volition, cannot, if we respect the facts, be taken as essential and necessary.<sup>2</sup> There are actions—to repeat

<sup>1</sup> This matter is discussed further in *M. o.s.* xiii [*E. xiv.*]. I do not propose to do more than mention the old mistake that the object of all desire is pleasure. We may fairly, I think, call this doctrine exploded.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot verify the presence of felt pleasure in the idea in all cases of volition, but this pleasure on the other hand (*E. xiv.*) seems essential to

my argument—which cannot be shown in fact to involve conation or desire, and some of these actions every one apart from theory would call volitions. And according to my definition of will such actions are volitions really. And I urge this agreement of doctrine with usage as some evidence that the definition which I offer is true. Another psychologist may reply that such actions cannot be volitions because they do not conform to his definition of will. And this answer may stand so long as his account is neither questioned nor denied. But afterwards, and when the very point at issue is the truth or falsehood of his account, it is obvious that any such position is fatally unsound.<sup>1</sup> If, in other words, an objection against the view of will which I adopt is to hold, that objection must be founded upon actual fact.

But even if desire and conation were everywhere present in will, their presence would supply no answer to the question before us. We want to understand how my idea is able in each case to gain its own particular reality. And when you point to conation and desire as that bridge by which the passage is made, your answer, even if it were not

desire. It must be understood (I will repeat) that, in speaking here of desire and conation, I am excluding the desire or conation of any mere element in my self, or again any desire or conation which is not experienced as such. On the alleged necessity for the presence of desire in volition the reader may find it instructive, and perhaps entertaining, to consult Professor Sully (*Human Mind*, ii. 214 foll.). Professor Sully in my opinion neither states fully nor indeed understands the case which it is incumbent on him to meet, and even then, in his attempt to show the presence of desire in all will, he begins even himself dimly to discover his collision with fact. He is forced to substitute for 'desire' such phrases as 'analogue of desire', 'nascent desire', and 'rudiment of desire', and he is driven to speak of an action as 'half-volitional'. But the seeking refuge in such unexplained, if not meaningless, phrases is, I would submit, an unconscious admission of failure. The only thing like an argument to be found in Professor Sully's pages is the contention that pleasure and pain are of such importance in development that they must be regarded as even now essential to volition. I shall deal with this point hereafter.

<sup>1</sup> This seems an evident truth, but it is too often not recognized in practice. The case of 'disinterested actions' in Professor Bain's psychology may perhaps be cited as a well-known instance of its neglect. But in other forms this neglect is still too prevalent in the psychology of will.

contrary to fact, seems absurdly deficient. I may desire and I may strive (let us suppose) to skate or to play on the organ, or I may struggle to recall to memory some half-forgotten name, and yet, with no means of passage beyond a bare effort, my idea surely never would pass into reality. The passage from the idea to inward or to outward fact requires some particular bridge, and such a bridge is not given by the mere presence of a desire or a conation.

You may repeat your old song that the springs of action are pleasure and pain, and that, wherever I will, it is in the end these which produce my volition. But (*a*) in the first place, I may once more remark, your statement is contrary to fact. There are cases of rapid volition where such a doctrine is even seen plainly to break down. And (*b*) in the second place, to identify pain and pleasure with aversion and desire is surely to fall into a palpable and gross mistake. And it is not true even that pain and pleasure are always accompanied by aversion and desire. Nor in the case of pleasure do the facts allow us to admit even a tendency always to produce motion rather than rest.<sup>1</sup> But (*c*) in no case could pleasure and pain explain the particular detail of will. That which has to be explained is the passing, in a given individual case, of this particular idea to its own special reality. And even if against the facts we admit that apart from the influence of pleasure and pain there is in no case volition—even if we allow that everywhere in this sense pleasure and pain produce action—yet with this the essence of the volitional passage remains unexplained. We have not learnt how this idea, in distinction from that

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of all these points I must once more refer the reader to *M. o.s.* xiii [*E.* xiv]. The existence of pleasures without want or desire is an old and well-known doctrine which I should have thought could not fairly be ignored; and in this opinion I am not shaken even by the following oracle, 'Wollen wir näher beschreiben, was wir denn bei Lust und Unlust in uns finden, so wissen wir dies nicht anschaulicher zu thun, als indem wir die Lust als ein Streben nach dem Gegenstand hin, die Unlust als ein Widerstreben gegen ihn bezeichnen' (Wundt, *Phys. Psych.* i. 589). I must be excused from any attempt to reproduce this sentence in English. I understand Professor Külpe to dissent from it (*Lehre vom Willen*, pp. 26, 49).

other idea, is able to realize its own special existence. The whip may start the horses, but the whip will throw no bridge across the stream. You must (we may put it otherwise) have machinery of a certain kind before you can set it in motion for a particular end. And I cannot see how by any stretch general pleasure and pain can be taken to serve as special machinery.<sup>1</sup>

Let us pass on to ask in what this machinery does really consist. Our answer to this question will traverse ground which is in the main quite familiar, and we may content ourselves therefore with a summary statement. We have in the first place a variety of special 'dispositions', and we have in the second place the presence of some ideal suggestion which is at the same time the presence of the starting-point of some one disposition. The consequent passage of this special disposition into act is, we may say, the bridge which carries our idea over into reality.<sup>2</sup> (a) As to the nature of these dispositions I can say very little. They either are simple, or else are complex wholes of more or less systematic detail. And they are native, or otherwise independent, or again on the other hand to a greater or a less extent have been acquired. On their origin I shall have, however, to say something hereafter. Dispositions again may be merely physical at first, or may later become so, and they may be physical wholly or merely in some part of their subordinate detail.<sup>3</sup> But, to serve in volition proper as a means of transition, a disposition must possess in all cases a psy-

<sup>1</sup> And we must of course say the same thing of Attention. The doctrine that attention is the essence of will was popularized by the late Dr. Carpenter (*Mental Physiology*, 1874), and I am personally indebted to him for having then forced that question into the front. Dr. Carpenter's work in psychology cannot, I imagine, be rated highly, but on one or two points he has not generally gained the credit which he seems really to have deserved. On the subject of Attention I must refer to *M.* n.s. xi, No. 41 [*E.* xxiv].

<sup>2</sup> I will ask lower down if there is any exception to this general law of will.

<sup>3</sup> By 'merely physical' I do not mean merely physical absolutely, but simply with reference to the consciousness of the subject. And again, when I speak of an aspect as psychical, I do not mean to deny that it possesses also a physical side.

chical aspect. The real essence of a disposition I make no attempt to explain, but in and for psychology it is a standing tendency or an individual law. Given, that is, one of two connected elements, physical or psychical or again possessing both characters, a disposition is the tendency for the other element to appear in consequence. And this second element itself may have a single or a double character. (b) On the other side we have an idea suggested in fact, an idea which is more or less identical in character with the first element of some psychical disposition. And this idea may come direct from a perception, or it may be suggested again in some other way. (c) The disposition in this manner is started into action, and the process which we have described is of course so far what is called Redintegration. (d) And at this point we may seem to encounter a difficulty. In will, as we know, the suggested idea is the idea of the end, and therefore the idea which is required in volition must be the idea of the disposition's result. But on the other side to start the disposition, and so to produce the actual result, what you want is the idea of the disposition's beginning. For dispositions, if they ever work in both directions, do not work thus in general. Let us suppose, for example, that the sight or the smell of a fruit has somehow—let us say through an original disposition<sup>1</sup>—produced the satisfaction of eating it. This experience, we may suppose further, has left behind it its result in a new and acquired disposition which at once is physical and psychical. The sensations and feelings, which accompanied the beginning of the process of eating, will now tend to bring in the actual continuance and end of that process. And there will be a tendency also for any suggested idea of the fruit to qualify itself further by the ideal sweetness of the fruit in my mouth<sup>2</sup>. But, it will be objected, this

<sup>1</sup> This original disposition will be physical in part or physical wholly. It is unnecessary for our present purpose to decide between these alternatives.

<sup>2</sup> I do not deny that, without any ideal modification of perceptions in themselves, there might up to a certain point be a development of diverse reactions corresponding to different perceptions. Objects, that is, not modified themselves ideally so as in this way to have acquired meanings,

ideal sweetness, however much present and desired, will not reproduce the actual process of taking and eating. For the sweetness, though identified with the result of the tendency, is not identified with that point from which the tendency starts. In other words, that idea of the end, which is essential to will, is useless for will because in short it is not the idea of the beginning.

To this objection I reply that dispositions are not merely successive.<sup>1</sup> The operation of seeing and eating the fruit is, for example, a connected series. It is a whole in which an identical character is maintained and developed. And the various stages of the detailed process, since they all qualify one whole, are connected with this whole; and they are connected, through this whole, with one another throughout. The sensations and feelings, which belong to the beginning of the process of eating, belong also to that same fruit which is connected with the taste of sweetness. And the idea of sweetness therefore, indirectly and by means of this unity, can ideally revive the felt aspect of the beginning. But, when this aspect is present, we have seen that the disposition to eat has now been supplied with the condition of its actual movement. And to object that a suggested idea, being a mere idea, is not the psychological fact required for this beginning would clearly be mistaken.<sup>2</sup> It is enough that you have something, whatever it may be,

might become associated through trials, through failures and successes, each externally with a diverse act. The connexions here would be external psychically, because the acquired dispositions would not be psychical. How far such a development is possible in fact I need not discuss, because I am unable to see how, upon this line, volition would ever be developed. I have found Dr. Stout's teaching on the nature of the 'disposition' left behind by practical experience not easy to understand. It is to my mind deficient in clearness. See *Manual*, bk. i, chap. 2, and bk. iii, chap. 1.

<sup>1</sup> I have already entered somewhat more fully into this very important matter in *M. n.s.* viii. 7 [*T.R.* 360-2], to which I would refer the reader. Cf. also *A.R.* 41 = 49.

<sup>2</sup> An idea, so far as referred away from my psychical moment to another subject, is certainly so far an abstraction from psychical fact. On the other hand, if confined to this aspect of itself, the idea could not be my idea at all. The idea in short, to be an idea, must have its own psychical existence, which existence is not referred away as above.

which possesses the right content. And it is an error to imagine in the soul a gulf fixed so that identity cannot traverse it.

The passage in volition from idea to fact, we said, was made by a bridge. And the bridge, we find, is a disposition, the latter element of which has through experience become qualified in idea by its starting-point. If in its origin the disposition is but physical, there is so far no will. But through experience of the process, both in its beginning and its result, we have now an acquired disposition which on one side of its working is psychical. The result is qualified in idea by those feelings which made part of the beginning, and there is a tendency for these feelings, when suggested, to pass into the actual result. And the suggested end, therefore, serves as the ideal beginning, and itself starts the machinery which bridges the passage into fact.

The new result, which in this way has been produced, need not of course reproduce the old result in every feature. The disposition, we must remember, is in itself always general. In our mental development dispositions are specified into subordinate varieties, but no disposition, however individual, can lose the character of a general tendency. And the present idea of the end coincides but generally with that disposition which it excites and which carries it into fact. It is the present situation which, we may say, selects through an idea the special tendency required, and then itself from that basis particularizes the actual result in accordance with itself. And there would naturally be room at this point for much discussion and comment. But the difficulty at this point, I would add, does not attach itself specially to volition, but belongs to the doctrine of reproduction in general. Within the limits of the present inquiry it would be difficult to enter further into the subject, and I do not think that here we are called on to do so.

I will now proceed to deal briefly with several objections. (a) 'There is a fatal defect', I may be told, 'in the account which has been offered; for it starts the disposition from its psychical side, and any such start is impos-



sible. Even if we suppose that a psychical result could conceivably so follow, we must deny the sequence of a physical effect from a psychical cause or condition. You, it is true, do not take the psychical antecedent as bare; but, and this is the vital point, you regard it as active. But the soul and its states, if not inert altogether, are inert necessarily in relation to the physical series.' This objection, however, denies absolutely the real existence of volition, and when on the other hand we ask for its own foundation and basis, that basis is found to consist in mere prejudice.<sup>1</sup> (b) 'Your account', it may be said, 'conflicts with the course of fact as ascertained by physiology.' This is an objection into which my knowledge does not permit me to enter. But I know that for an outsider to assume the finality of such a physiological result, even if that result for a time had found a general acceptance, would be at least to desert the guidance of probability. I therefore do not think that we are called on to discuss what would follow in the event of such a final conflict.

(c) It may be objected that the above explanation, if correct in itself, is inadequate for its purpose. If no more than this were wanted in order for the idea to carry itself out into act, the idea of an action could never or seldom remain unrealized. But such unrealized ideas, upon the other hand, are a common experience. From which it follows that the essence of volition must consist in something other than ideomotor action as explained above. But a sufficient reply to this objection is really not difficult. A

<sup>1</sup> On the connexion of soul and body see my *Appearance*. The above prejudice of course is widely prevalent. Professor Titchener for example, in his *Outline of Psych.*, p. 343, instructs the student that to suppose a causal connexion between physical and psychical, if perhaps not forbidden by 'metaphysics' is contrary to 'logic'. For myself I really do not know whether I am even permitted by 'logic' to hope that the student does not wholly depend for his information upon Professor Titchener. Since writing the above I have made acquaintance with Professor Münsterberg's interesting *Grundzüge der Psych.* No one who can appreciate good work would speak disrespectfully of Professor Münsterberg. At the same time I do not understand how he can think that those, who on the above point reject his conclusion, would accept the premises from which he draws it.

disposition, even where it is not a practical tendency, is something, the result from which is in any case conditional. And we have long ago seen that, for an idea to realize itself, that idea must be dominant. I will, however, add some remarks here by way of further explanation. (i) An idea has against it always the general inertia of my present condition (cf. James, ii. 526). This, to speak in the abstract, is an obstacle which is opposed to any possible change. Hence, if you take an idea, weak in itself and unsupported from without, my mere inertia is enough to prevent that idea's realization. Where I am resting placidly or again am mechanically employed, the bare irrelevant suggestion of a change, if that is weak, will by itself be ineffective.<sup>1</sup> (ii) Apart from some unusual strength, absolute or relative, an idea of change will not dominate unless it finds support in my present condition. There may be a present group of sensations in harmony with the beginning of the change, together with uneasiness and psychical movement in the direction required. And this may be assisted by the perception of some special object. And again a special disposition, or group of dispositions, connected with the idea may be predominant and explosive. And of course, *mutatis mutandis*, there is the same kind of support from the physical side. We may thus say generally that, apart from exceptional strength, an idea will not dominate except through the favour it receives. And, when it finds the mind engaged specially in an opposite direction, the suggested idea will under ordinary conditions fail to gain control. (iii) Up to this point we have considered cases where a genuine idea of change has been present, but where that idea has failed to dominate and move me. But the idea may have been qualified, so as itself not to be the idea of a change which is to happen here and now. The way of connexion with my real world may be seen by me to be absent, as where the suggested change is regarded as merely imaginary. Or again the idea of change may have become an element in some wider idea, a whole in which

<sup>1</sup> I should be inclined to illustrate here by the absence in general of actual movement in dreams. See *M. n.s.* iii [*E. xviii*].

it is taken as subordinated or even negated. We have in none of these cases the dominant idea of a change in my world, and, even if the change were realized, we should not have here a genuine volition (cf. *M.* n.s. xi, Nos. 43, 44 [*E.* xxv and xxvi]).

I will pass from these objections to deal with another kind of difficulty. Your account, it may be said, is based on redintegration, and yet that law, however valid, is certainly not final. The tendency of every idea to realize itself in existence is really more ultimate, and even beyond this we may find a law which is still more fundamental. Every psychical element by itself involves a more or less unnatural mutilation and sundering, and every such element seeks to repair its defect. It therefore tends to reproduce its complement and to restore itself to the full character of the whole. But (however that may be) I see no advantage in discussing such a doctrine here. For if the self-realization of an idea in will is an instance of this ultimate tendency, that in no way would conflict with our general account. And since an ultimate tendency does not realize itself, I presume, without particular machinery, we were right in any case to seek that machinery in dispositions and in redintegration. There is, however, a further point on which I admit that my account is inadequate. Redintegration works, I believe, in all cases of volition, and in most cases I think that its working suffices. But there are other cases which seem to call for an additional law. An idea has a tendency everywhere to reinforce that existence which possesses its content, and, where existence has a content which partly corresponds to the idea, the idea has a tendency to create in fact a completer agreement. It thus transforms the existence to its own character, and so realizes itself. Now redintegration, it may be fairly said, will here not wholly account for the result, and we must therefore admit a further law, say, of Fusion or Blending. This is a difficult point which I am not disposed here to discuss, but the suggested conclusion once more need occasion no difficulty. If we recognize a tendency which in the end falls outside of redintegration, and even if we go on to call that

tendency irreducible and ultimate, the doctrine of volition which has been offered remains unshaken. Volition still will consist in the self-realization of an idea, and redintegration will still be the machinery which for the most part brings about that result. Our account, in short, must be modified merely so far that we have to admit the working to some extent of a further machinery.<sup>1</sup> There is therefore no room at this point to intrude with a faculty of Apperception or Attention, and to offer this as an explanation of the passage in will. For in any case nothing can anywhere be really explained by a faculty. And if in this case the faculty is offered merely as the compendious statement of a law, it is still objectionable because probably it does not answer to the facts. It is either contrary to the facts, or else idle, or else at least to myself it remains unintelligible.<sup>2</sup> And any suggestion that in will sometimes there is no idea, or no idea which realizes itself, has been disposed of long ago in preceding discussions.

We may thus conclude that will is a psychical process certainly not original or ultimate or self-explanatory. It is everywhere a result from that which by itself is not volition. The passage of an idea into existence, we found, is the essence of will; and that passage, we have now seen,

<sup>1</sup> I assume here that redintegration cannot legitimately be reduced to partial fusion. I should certainly myself not agree to speak of the fusion of an idea with a disposition.

<sup>2</sup> It is contrary to fact that the tendency of an idea to realize itself depends on pleasure or pain, and contrary again that it depends on my attention to the idea. The assertion, again, that in volition the idea must be 'apperceived' may perhaps be admitted if 'apperception' is used in a very wide sense, but such an assertion is useless if offered as an explanation of will. For whether in fact an apperceived idea realizes itself or not must depend in each case on *how* the idea is apperceived. If it is apperceived theoretically, that so far tends to prevent the realization of the idea in fact. But as soon as you inquire about the nature of this *how* and this difference, you are thrown back on the machinery which we have described in the text. Into that which Professor Wundt calls 'apperception' I am unable to enter. The limited time at my disposal would hardly justify an attempt on my part to ascertain that exact meaning which for so many years Professor Wundt has been endeavouring to expound or perhaps to discover.

depends on machinery. Thus in psychology the conditions of will come before will itself, and, at least in psychology, these conditions are in every sense more ultimate than their consequence. You may perhaps insist that the tendency of an idea to realize itself after all is original, and you may add that in this tendency you find the real essence of volition. But how and why one idea realizes itself in fact while another idea fails—this is the question, I submit, which we are called on to answer. And if the answer to this question falls outside of what you offer as the essence of will, your view, I must conclude, is certainly mistaken or at best defective. With regard to external will that doctrine which fifty years ago was advocated by Lotze<sup>1</sup> has remained, we may say, in principle unshaken and unanswered. And a like conclusion holds also in the case of internal volition. We have seen that in the main this also depends on dispositions and on redintegration, and thus results from machinery which pre-exists and is itself independent of will. There was a partial exception, we agreed, in some cases where the idea reinforces an element which is given in outer or in inner perception. And the exact nature of such cases we were obliged to leave doubtful. But we certainly in these cases should be wrong to assume that the idea works apart from a pre-existing disposition to the result.<sup>2</sup> In any case Fusion depends on the presence of an idea together with a given element which possesses in part the same character. And I do not see that such a fact, even if it had to remain unexplained, would support the doctrine that will is independent and original.

I may now proceed to touch very briefly on the development of will, but must first insist further on its connexion with pleasure and pain. I have declined to include either of these in the definition of will, but on the other hand I admit the importance of both. If I were writing a psycho-

<sup>1</sup> In his *Medicinische Psychologie*, 1852.

<sup>2</sup> To some extent these cases can be reduced to the support and liberation of a disposition previously held in check. And the idea itself, we must remember, may represent a disposition. I do not however (I must repeat) accept such explanations as quite adequate.

logical treatise and not a mere defence of a special definition, I should have to lay stress on pleasure and perhaps a still greater stress upon pain. Apart from their influence usually, we may say, an idea fails to carry itself out. It is either banished from the mind or is at least held in check. The unpleasantness of want suggests, and by persisting maintains, the idea of relief. And, in the absence of want, a suggested change is emphasized and supported by felt pleasure, while on the other side felt pain or uneasiness tends to bring about change.<sup>1</sup> And when we consider the origin and growth of dispositions and habits, the selective agency of pain appears as a prominent factor. I am ready to agree that without pain and pleasure the will in fact does not originate, and that without pain and pleasure, to speak in general and in the main, it does not now exist. But on the other hand, while I find actions which apart from theory no one would deny to be volitions, but which, so far as I see, do not issue from pain or from pleasure, I cannot admit pain and pleasure into the essence of will. I cannot in these cases find felt pleasure in the idea of the change, or felt pain in the existence which opposes the idea. And further I must insist once more that in pleasure and pain you have not an explanation of the passage of the idea to its reality. They are a means of selection among various ways of bridging the interspace, but I could not possibly admit that either itself serves as a bridge. The bridge in short remains external to them as it is external to the sundered idea. Thus, if pleasure and pain always were present in will and contributed always to its existence, they could be placed in its definition as at most a constant accessory in fact to its main essence. But since the facts are otherwise, I have no choice but to exclude them wholly. If I am to ignore or to override apparent exceptions to their presence, I can do this only on the strength of a necessary principle. But I have here looked in vain for any principle or for any necessity.

From this I must pass to consider an objection based on the development of will. 'Your account', I may be told,

<sup>1</sup> On these points I have enlarged in *M.* o.s. xiii [*E.* xiv].

'makes will rest upon dispositions. But dispositions in fact are made by and rest upon will. You have therefore turned in a circle and have explained will by itself.' An objection of this kind clearly opens a wide field for discussion. But we may perhaps deal with it sufficiently in a limited space if we keep in mind throughout some general considerations.

(i) It is not permitted in psychology to confuse the questions of origin and of essence. You cannot assert that a psychical fact now possesses a certain aspect, because you judge that at its origin this aspect was present and was even necessary. It is of course legitimate to argue that this aspect has not disappeared, if, that is, you are prepared to state the reason upon which your argument rests. But no man, who believes from observation that in some cases the aspect is absent, can accept your conclusion unless your reasoning, in short, is conclusive. And the general disposition to believe that what has been is, or that what is usually is always, cannot seriously be offered as a conclusive argument. Now in the present case, though it may well be due to my limited knowledge of the subject, I do not know of any attempt to offer a serious argument. If there is a conclusive reason why pain and pleasure cannot in some cases now be absent in fact from volition, I have not seen so much as an attempt to offer that reason. But I am too familiar with the argument that apart from pain and pleasure there is *never* volition, because the presence of these is *always* implied in will.

(ii) It is indefensible, we have seen, to confound origin with essence, and there is a further confusion under this head which should be banished from psychology. Let us suppose that in the history of the animal kingdom, or even in the history of the human race, certain dispositions have arisen as the result of pleasure and pain, or again as the result even of volition. And let us suppose that you are in a position to establish this origin. But to advance from this basis to an assertion now about the human individual, and to urge that in him these dispositions are to be taken as resulting from will, although you cannot maintain that they have arisen from *his* will—surely no leap of this kind

is allowed in psychology. My will, whatever else I may inherit, is certainly my own, and the will of another that comes to me as a transmitted disposition is most emphatically not a volition of mine. And it is illegitimate to assume that, because a thing has happened in the history of the race, the same thing must repeat itself in the same way in the individual's development.

(iii) And on another point the reader must allow me to insist once more on the difference between assumption and proof. Suppose that you have shown (which I am sure you cannot show) that in every case dispositions are the result of pain and pleasure—you cannot, starting from this, affirm that dispositions originate in will, except on the strength of a further logical step. And, in the presence of a denial, to attempt that step by bare assumption is not permissible. Now I am forced to deny that the working of pleasure and pain is always volitional. When on the presence of a stimulus a reaction takes place, and when that reaction is maintained and intensified because it is pleasant, and in consequence tends now by association to be connected with the stimulus—this to me so far is not in the proper sense volitional. And when at the same level pain prevents the formation of some association, either through a counter-habit or simply by the removal of the painful—to speak of merely so much as being will, I must call indefensible. The doctrine that pleasure and pain imply, or even in all cases coincide with, conation or desire, at least in the sense of a desire or a conation of my self, we had to reject as contrary to irrefragable facts. And I must repeat even once again that the proof, if such a proof were possible, that dispositions originate through pleasure and pain, is not, taken by itself, a proof that they result from will. I am not of course speaking of proofs which seem to consist in mere verbal definition.

Having taken such a position I consider that in the main I am not called on to discuss further the argument from development. But for the sake of clearness I will try briefly to pursue this point further. There is an attempt, as I understand it, to show that will has no origin beyond



itself, and that it does not contain and rest on passages which are given to it and which come before it in time. And in answer to the obvious objection that will depends upon given dispositions, an endeavour is made to show that dispositions, if you only go back far enough, themselves are a result which comes from will. Now if will is defined as we have defined it, such a thesis seems hardly to be arguable. And if will is identified with the working of pleasure and pain, the reader may now recall that we have rejected that assumption as contrary to fact. And we found again that, even if it were true that all dispositions are formed under the influence of pleasure and pain, it would hardly follow from this that pain and pleasure have made and produced them. You cannot, in short, to such an extent select and develop your means that you can maintain in the end that no means are presupposed.

There is, it seems to me, but one sense in which will could be really 'autogenous', and in which, as will, it would depend on nothing prior to itself. If you take your will to be a man who from the first possesses a certain character, and if you suppose that your development consists in the willed selection by this man of that material which suits with his nature, such a process, I agree, might perhaps be called the 'autogeny' of your will. At any rate your nature, so far as acquired, would have been acquired by your will, and certainly that result would have come from your volition. But no such doctrine, I presume, could be even so much as discussed in psychology. On the other hand, apart from an inadmissible view of this kind, I see no sense in which the will can be really 'autogenous'.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, within psychology we seek for a will which is before dispositions, it may repay us to see for ourselves how far a consistent view is possible. We must begin here

<sup>1</sup> I am far from denying that what is found to be true and beautiful and good is in the end so found because it is felt to answer the needs and express the character of the self. But I hardly think that psychology can concern itself even with this. And it would not lead to the conclusion that will is prior to psychical dispositions, or indeed is anything itself but a psychical result.

by enlarging will so as to include the results which in the widest sense are due to pain and pleasure. And we must go on to suppose a being which in its structure has no tendency to any special ways of reaction. From the stimulus of sensation, without regard to the sensation's quality, are to come diverse reactions which vary fortuitously according to the conditions of the moment. Or we may say that these reactions come only when pain and pleasure are added to the stimulus. This connexion of pain and pleasure with the stimulus is itself fortuitous, or else it itself must depend on an original disposition. And if diverse kinds of movement, such as contraction and expansion, follow specially from pain and pleasure, that would evidently once more presuppose a disposition. But, however the variations first arise, they are in some way supported or banished by pleasure and pain. And thus, by a natural selection which is also psychical, certain reactions are favoured and are developed into dispositions and habits.

How far we here have dispensed wholly with dispositions the reader must judge. But when we ask if such an account holds of the development of a human individual, the answer, I presume, must be a decided negative. Even if you add hypotheses with regard to his intra-uterine life, you cannot maintain that the individual to so great an extent is himself the immediate result of conditions and of fortunate survival. And, at least in human psychology, we surely in each case must begin with the individual. If on the other hand we go backwards in the development of our race and of the animal kingdom, we are met at a certain point by difficulties of a further kind. Let us suppose that at a certain point biology is willing to accept our being that has no special structural tendencies, yet at this point we perhaps have gone quite beyond psychology. How much in its psychical aspect can we say about a being such as this? If at such a supposed level it possesses any consciousness of its own, how far does that consciousness contain and depend upon pleasure and pain? I should have thought myself that, at least in the present state of our knowledge, it was not possible even to assert the existence

of either pleasure or pain at the beginnings (wherever we place them) of psychical life. That all conscious life has its suffering and its enjoyment, we are prone to believe. We have some reason to think this, and to hope for a greater knowledge in the future. But on the other side to draw a necessary conclusion on this point seems certainly not warranted. And you cannot argue first that the will was such at the beginning because it is such now, and then, in the second place, when a man denies that the will really is so now, reply that it must be so now because it was such at the beginning. Further I may repeat that, even if the will at the beginning had really possessed a certain character, you cannot assume that in every respect this character has been preserved unchanged.

The effort to deny that will depends upon given dispositions, and the attempt to carry these dispositions back to a point where they originate in will, must end in failure. The will as an individual, who for private reasons or for no reason breaks out into definite action, seems hardly admissible. And again there is a wrong identification of will with the influence of pain and pleasure. There is a false assumption that such an influence, if original, could not later be dispensed with. And, lastly, by retiring backward in search of an uncontaminated beginning, you are threatened at a certain point by a formidable dilemma. You will reach a stage where there still are inherited dispositions, but where these dispositions now appear to have become merely physical.<sup>1</sup> And here, without finding what you seek, you will have been carried beyond psychology. Or on the other hand you will be forced to carry over into biology psychological doctrines which within psychology you cannot establish or justify.

'But no,' I shall be answered, 'you do not understand the logic of our argument. We take as a fact the actual formation of dispositions in accordance with our doctrine, and the fact therefore depends upon no preconception. For in our actual experience we can observe the production of

<sup>1</sup> Merely physical, that is, not absolutely, but from the point of view of any special science.

habits. Dispositions are made, and we ourselves see them made, through the influence of pleasure and pain. And hence we are able to affirm "This is how they are made", and we can therefore deny any other origin as unknown or rather as impossible.' Before I consider this denial, there are several points which it is desirable to recall. In the first place, unless a disposition has been made by my will, it is, I insist, external to that will in whatever way it has been made. The argument therefore must mean that in my own individual history I have made without exception all my dispositions on one and the same principle. And, if the argument begins to hesitate at this point, it has failed. And I may once more remind the reader that, where variations are selected under pleasure and pain, the selected variations do not cease to be external to these feelings. And at any rate in no case can all such selection be rightly called volitional. Whether in our experience no associations are formed in fact, except under the influence of pain and pleasure, seems to me a question on which, to say the least, some doubt is possible. For myself, while I here will not go beyond doubt, I certainly cannot accept the above assumption as true. I do not see how to deny, that is, that an association may arise from a mere emphasized or repeated conjunction and without the influence of pain or pleasure.

But it is time we turned to consider the negative side of the above argument. We know, it is contended, how in our experience dispositions are formed, and we therefore may exclude any other mode of origin as impossible. But such an exclusion, I reply, if it is to be logical, must rest upon thorough knowledge. The excluded must be meaningless, or it must be self-contradictory, or it must be in plain collision with something positive which is itself clearly known.<sup>1</sup> Now can we say that the formation of dispositions within our own experience is known clearly? Is the influence of pain and pleasure a thing which we can call really understood? I do not myself see how any one can maintain that this is actually the case. How then can the formation of dispositions apart from this influence be

<sup>1</sup> I do not here ask how these aspects are connected.

taken to contradict our alleged fact of experience? To assert that no physical cause can produce anything like a disposition, and to say the same of any psychical cause other than that which is alleged, seems at least to me little better than an unwarranted and downright assumption. And thus the negative argument has only to be examined to be dismissed as untenable.

If you bring in metaphysics this result, it is possible, might be altered. You might contend that the minimum of reality in the end involves pain and pleasure, and involves what you call will. And you might go on to argue that to suppose the contrary even in a special science is not permissible. But, without attempting here to enter into your metaphysics, I must insist that to intrude such speculations into the sciences is not permissible. If a thesis is such that it cannot be justified on psychological grounds, that thesis, however admirable elsewhere, has no place within psychology.

I must conclude then that, even if action under pleasure and pain is wrongly identified with will, we cannot, however far we go back, get rid of external connexions. We must suppose that special dispositions everywhere precede and are the foundation of will. And, even if by retracing the history of the race you could free yourself at some point from given dispositions, yet, when you come to the individual, the difficulty returns. For if the will of the individual presupposes dispositions which by him are unwilled, his will originates in that which to it is external. And even if the origin of the individual will were in accordance with your doctrine, you could make no logical conclusion from the origin to the essence. It is bad psychology, it is no better than prejudice, to assume that a thing must remain all that it was. The fact is that the working of pleasure and pain is not all volitional, and, again, the fact is that some volitions do not involve any such working. And no mere argument from origin, even if it were well-grounded, can alter these facts. Hence pleasure and pain, however influential in general they may be, cannot be given a place in the definition of will.

With this conclusion I may perhaps bring these articles to an end. They have covered, I fear, so much ground as to unfit them each for a separate appearance. On the other hand they have neglected some parts of their subject, while what they have discussed has been treated too unsystematically. But they may serve, I hope, as some defence for that definition which they advocate; and, if they lead the reader once more to examine doctrines too lightly maintained, they will have satisfied at least the expectation of the writer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I had hoped to have been able long before this to discuss the doctrine of will, which has been put forward by Professor Royce in his interesting and important work, *The World and the Individual*. I find to my regret that I can do no more than indicate very briefly the general attitude which, at least in psychology, I am forced to take with regard to it. (i) I could not agree that in psychology everything, which is felt as the satisfaction of my nature, can be taken as the realization of an idea or as willed. (ii) I must again dissent from the view that an idea is in itself so far the realization of a purpose or will. This is the case, I should say, only where there has been a will to have that idea, and in this case an idea of the idea must have preceded. (iii) I cannot make our intellectual and aesthetic self-realization subordinate to practice except in a sense and within limits far narrower than those assigned by Professor Royce. (iv) I cannot agree that in cognition the object is in the end selected by an idea. On the contrary I think that the idea is itself in the end 'selected' by something not an idea.

Generally I agree that the real is what satisfies, and that no other definition of reality in the end is so ultimate as this. But in psychology I certainly cannot say that what satisfies is or has been willed. And even outside psychology I cannot take reality as being merely, or even in the first place, a satisfied will. I am unable, that is, to regard will, either in myself or in the universe, as being more than one partial aspect of the whole. But I must hope to discuss hereafter some of the doctrines contained in Professor Royce's instructive work.

## THE EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUALISM

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'SPIRITUALISM, if true, demonstrates mind without brain, and intelligence disconnected from what is termed a material body. . . . It demonstrates that the so-called dead are still alive; that our friends are still with us though unseen. . . . It thus furnishes that *proof* of a future life which so many crave.'<sup>1</sup> The present article may be taken as a denial of these theses.

Three great gulfs, to be crossed by three separate labours, divide the spiritualist from his Land of Promise. His first task is to prove that the 'phenomena' are real. He must show next that they are not the abnormal work of human spirits. But, when these obstacles are passed, a third closes the way. He has to leap from the fact of non-human intelligences to the goal of immateriality and immortal life. It is this alone for which the common spiritualist cares, and my object is to show that, if all else were done, this at least is hopeless. Let us accept without question the phenomena as alleged. Let us admit that these 'demonstrate' minds extra-human and in communion with ours. But, arguing from these premises, we utterly deny the further conclusion. It does not follow that these minds have no material bodies. It does not follow that the dead are really alive. We have no right on this evidence to believe in any future; and, if we believed in it, then on this evidence we should be fools if we craved it; and, if the reader cares to traverse a dry chain of arguments, he will see with what poor fancies the spiritualist is fed.

I will begin at once with a fatal objection. In the premises of the spiritualist there is nothing at variance with

<sup>1</sup> Wallace, *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, p. 212.

the conclusions of a gross and thorough Materialism.<sup>1</sup> The materialist regards souls as the adjectives of what is senseless. They come and go with, and they depend on, collocations of bare matter. But the spiritualist has found souls not dependent on the matter which makes human bodies, and he forthwith concludes that these souls are bodiless or are clothed in 'ether'. He has argued in short from a vicious alternative. He starts with 'Souls exist not dependent on the matter connected with *our* souls', and he rushes to 'Souls exist without anything that can be called matter at all'. But now, suppose that there is matter different from ours, and which normally is not perceptible, and we have a pitfall into which the spiritualist has fallen blindly. He either has argued wrongly from his premises, or else, where he knows nothing, has assumed omniscience.

As to what matter is we might dispute for an eternity and fail to agree; and the difficulties are not simply made by metaphysics, but obtrude themselves in forms like those of 'fluids' and 'ether'. But by 'matter' we commonly mean a reality extended in three dimensions, which can be moved, and can move, and can cause sensation. And we are used to suppose that there *is* no matter but that which we normally perceive, or which forms one system with what affects our senses. But, if we reflect, we see at once that this supposal rests on nothing. There is no logical objection to the possibility of several kinds of matter, which, for us at least, do not even form one system, which all have several spaces of their own, and which do not move one another at all. How, indeed, *could* we be sure that there is not matter which fails to affect us, but which, if different ourselves, we at once should perceive?<sup>2</sup> But, if so much is possible, then I would suggest something else. This matter, which usually is indifferent to our own, may under unknown con-

<sup>1</sup> In order to avoid misunderstanding I may say that I do not advocate materialism. I might add, with some prospect of being misunderstood, that I object to spiritualism because it itself is an outcome of materialistic tendencies. It is merely another sort of materialism.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wallace (*Miracles*, p. 45) agrees that there probably are 'forms of matter and modes of ethereal motion' other than those which our senses enable us to recognize.



ditions move and be moved by it. It may thus affect our organs as well as our environment, and again in its turn be affected by ourselves. But if matter of this kind were organized and so got souls, then these souls would depend on corporeal movements. They would be embodied, and yet, though commonly invisible, might in abnormal states communicate with us and produce all the facts ascribed wrongly to spirits. This hypothesis is consistent with a thorough materialism, but it covers every part of the alleged phenomena. And if the spiritualist retorts, 'It is an idle hypothesis'; not idle, we shall answer, if it accounts for the facts, and in itself entirely conceivable. But your naked spirit is perhaps not logically conceivable, and at any rate is also a mere hypothesis. And it is not the hypothesis which best accounts for the facts.

We ourselves have souls and bodies, and we perceive certain facts, assumed to be the effects of souls not our own, which yet, because like *our* effects, show that other souls exist. And we press on with this conclusion in spite of the fact that we have failed to find the intermediate bodies. Now we agreed to take this failure as evidence that the facts are not effects of *our* bodies; but the spiritualist wants to go much further than this. He argues, 'Not dependent upon *our* bodies, and therefore upon *none*, quite bodiless and "ethereal".' And this is irrational. For, in the first place, nothing excludes the idea that there are bodies not normally obvious to ourselves; or, in other words, such bodies are *possible*. And, in the second place, the evidence suggests that they are *real*. First, the analogy which we must use from the embodied soul is a ground, *a priori*, for expecting a body. And what is the evidence *a posteriori*? In the end it all resolves itself into effects on matter. There is not one shred, and there could not be one shred, incapable of being so interpreted. Nay, a great part, and apparently the part most relied on, could hardly be taken as anything *else*. Effects upon our matter have to be explained. Are they better explained by a different matter or by a naked ghost? Tables are moved, finger-marks and foot-marks are printed on sawdust, and furniture is shattered

by a force of several horse-power. 'And what need', exclaims the spiritualist, 'of any further witness? Behold the manifest ghost, not corporeal nor corruptible, and a pledge of our immortality.' And here argument ceases. The analogy suggests and the evidence points grossly to another unknown body; and if the spiritualist still clings to his naked soul, yet he cannot call it the one hypothesis which is possible. He cannot deny that every particle of the evidence can be explained by a soul embodied in matter. Thus, if we allow that non-human intelligences exist and produce our phenomena, we are as far away as ever from bodiless spirits. These intelligences may depend upon material motions; the materialist will urge that they are corruptible and mortal, and that, whether better in other respects or worse than ourselves, they are alike in this, that they arise and perish.

But the spiritualist will reply, 'Your alternative is false. We are not forced to choose between matter and ghosts. The spirits are not bodiless any more than we are, but their bodies are higher and of ethereal substance. Thus though impalpable they are potent, and though active indiscerptible, and such bodies are a warrant of immortality.' For myself I must reply that if they were ever so thin, I do not see how that brings them nearer to spirit. If they are extended and movable they are probably discerptible, and most assuredly we have no hint that they are anything but mortal. The possibility that they are *not* so is an idle fancy, for which the facts alleged give no sort of excuse. This 'spiritual body' is a foolish imagination. It inhabits our space and yet is not material. It is attenuated to that degree that it passes through matter, and yet is indivisible and everlasting. It is not quite a solid and not quite a spirit, nor yet quite a gas. It is inexplicable and not wanted to explain anything else. Once admit that matter may exist and not normally be perceived, and then its thinness or grossness becomes irrelevant. Admit, on the other hand, it is thin past earthly thinness, and it still is material and still discerptible.

We have started by assuming the existence of active non-human intelligences, and we have so far seen that the

conclusions of spiritualism are not rational. There is nothing to suggest that these souls are bare of bodies, but the evidence goes to show them both embodied and mortal. And we saw that this result is in no way shaken by the gratuitous chimera of a spiritual body. It may now, perhaps, be worth while to ask some questions as to the *nature* of these souls. Like ourselves they have bodies, and these bodies at least are presumably mortal, but can we know more? Is there anything to tell us if, as compared with ourselves, they are higher or lower, more or less spiritual? If we consider first their material performances, it is clear that they do much which we cannot do. And this certainly has weight. On the other hand, when we ask if they can do the things which we accomplish, the evidence fails us. And if, further, we inquire if our ordinary life may not seem to them extraordinary and even miraculous, we have no information. We are not able to tie knots in an endless cord, or to pass through a keyhole, and that is in their favour. On the other hand, they have never made anything useful or done anything great; and so far as we know, they could not if they would. Again, living as we do in two different worlds, what is common in one may be astonishing in another. If they pass through our keyholes perhaps we pass through theirs, and should bewilder them if, like ourselves, they were wise enough to wonder, or if our high matter could affect their gross bodies. But these are all idle fancies, worthless imaginings. We have no evidence which directly indicates that their bodies are either lower or higher than ours.

But when we ask as to their souls, I think we get a little light. When we weigh the probabilities, the balance does move in a certain direction. There is reason to think their souls *lower* than ours and, taken on the whole, less intelligent and feebler. Of course they perceive what we do not perceive, but so, to some extent, do the lower animals. That they perceive *all* that we perceive, or on the whole *more* than we do, there is no evidence. The unusual need not be higher, and to them we do not know what is unusual. And it would never do to say, 'But we ask questions and

they none, and therefore they know.' They might ask no questions because they have no curiosity, no sense of defect or desire for knowledge. Hence, if we keep to simple power of perception, we cannot say if they are higher or lower. It is better to pass to what we can judge of—intelligence and general powers of reason. But when we judge by these, the souls we converse with are lower than ourselves, and we have no reason to believe in others which are higher. To the damning evidence of the so-called Spirit-Teachings no answer can be made. It would be unfair to say that the best of them are twaddle, and they perhaps may be compared with our own pulpit-utterances. They are often edifying, and often reasonable, and sometimes silly, and usually dull. Still, to mention them in the same breath with the best human work would be wholly absurd. And it is an inferior race which can produce nothing better. The spiritualist, of course, has met this fact with an hypothesis. Our means of communication at present are faulty, or as yet we have not lighted on the superior persons of the higher world. But these hypotheses are arbitrary. They are based on the prejudice which they are meant to support, and they have no other basis. But throw prejudice aside, and judge simply from the facts, and the result is otherwise. I do not mean that, like the spiritualist, we should treat the uncertain as if we had exhausted it, but I mean that, if we argue from what we do know, then the spirits are probably lower than ourselves, and we are offered no reason for belief in any other and higher spirits.

We have now seen that the spirits are probably embodied, and that their minds at least are inferior to our own. And like ours their bodies are too probably discerptible, and their souls, the adjectives of those physical aggregates, must too probably perish. And assuredly the materialist laughs in derision. You may count it a great thing that thought does not depend on the matter of the brain, but what if it rests upon something more coarse, something that you would hold still more despicable and vile? Your new revelation of these latter days has given us some-

thing to hope and something to live for. It has reinstated the soul and re-established religion. But in these latter days religion rests on converse not with spirit above us but with spirits beneath us; and our hope is one day to be made like these spirits. Such spiritualism is not spiritual, such religion is mere superstition, and it conflicts with the best aspirations of the soul in a way in which modern materialism does not.

Spiritualism, so far as we have seen, is exploded. Admit its facts and its conclusions do not follow. If there are souls, not ours, behind its phenomena, yet these souls are not bodiless nor are they immortal. And presumably they are inferior to our own; they give us nothing to admire and nothing to hope for. But the spiritualist will urge that I have left out of view a main part of the evidence. I have said nothing of the testimony borne by the spirits, and I have neglected the great fact of spirit-identity—the proof that our relations still are alive, and that therefore we shall live. The discussion of these points was put off for a time, since they involve some difficulties and require some patience. I will deal with them forthwith, and we shall very soon find that the testimony borne by the spirits is worthless. We shall go on to see that their identity is not provable, nor, if provable, a warrant of immortality, nor in any way comfortable. Let us first take their testimony.

From this we get information, edifying if not useful, as to the things both of spirit-land and of our own earthly life; but what specially concerns us is the assertion that after death we too go to spirit-land, and that life there is, or may be, much higher than here. Still testimony, as we know, may be false as well as true, and the question is whether in the case of a spirit we have got any reason for supposing it true. I am compelled to believe that we have simply no reason. We have control neither over the facts deposed to, nor over the mind and character of the witness. But under such conditions any testimony is worthless; and if the reader will have patience, I will make this point good.

Testimony, we must remember, does not supersede experience. It can never be an independent source of

information, side by side and on a level with personal observation. For it must by its nature involve an inference, and that inference must be founded on our direct knowledge. It is an extension of our personal experience, but an extension that proceeds from and rests on that basis. We are indeed told that we have an instinct to believe, and that to take in mere assertion is to follow that instinct. And it is true that, when our mind is unformed and uncritical, the mere presentation of an idea to that mind is usually enough to generate belief. But then this is not the question. The question is not what we naturally do tend to believe, but what as rational beings we ought to believe. Should we accept anything and everything just because it is offered us by another intelligence? No one can maintain this. Well, but if we must discriminate and must use some criterion, what is it that we should use? Most palpably there is nothing but our own personal experience, and the inferences we can reasonably draw from that basis. And I think that every one in the end must take this view of the case, or find he is using words without a meaning.

What, however, do *we* mean? Do we mean that a man is to believe nothing but what he has seen, and nothing that runs counter to his private experience? We are far from meaning this. What we insist on is that our reason for believing the witness must come in the end from our own direct knowledge. It is not that we are confined to private experience, but that this experience itself must warrant our leaving it, by giving us a reason for going beyond. In the case of testimony what is this reason? It is an inference on our part to a mind in the witness which, first, is capable of having learnt the fact attested and, next, is able and willing to communicate the truth. We in short infer that the mind of the other may in these respects be treated as our mind; and in consequence we have merely to test its statements in the way in which we test our personal observations.<sup>1</sup> Thus, when Mr. A tells me of this or that event

<sup>1</sup> I cannot ask here how far the results of private experience may be set aside on the strength of testimony. I admit that in some cases they must be thus set aside. I have said something on this question elsewhere.

which lies outside the range of my own observations, what justifies my belief in him? It is, first, an inference to Mr. A's *ability*. He must have had a chance of observing, and must have used that chance rightly, from the proper point of view and without any bias. And how can I know this? Obviously from nothing beside my personal experience. Many links may intervene, but at last I must stand on my own knowledge of the world and of human nature. And it is the same when I ask about the truthfulness of the witness. I should not believe him unless I had reason to believe, first, that he can speak truth and, next, that he has no motive or unconscious bent towards deception.

Now the capacity and the desire of Mr. A to speak truth must rest in the end on my *positive* observation. But his absence of motive for untruth and deceit rests not only on that, but on something as well. It implies what may be called my *negative* experience, and it is based on an assumption. I assume that I know not quite *all* about the witness, but so much that, if he had a motive to deceive me, I should become aware of it. I assume that in my witness there exists no other life with other motives besides those which I discover. These, I think, are the criteria which we are forced to employ when we deal with unsupported human testimony. We do not always apply them with rigour and, where the testimony is supported by our own experience, we are, of course, not compelled to be so exacting. But where the gravest results follow from simple depositions, there we do and we must bring our tests to bear strictly. Without tests such as these (the defenders of miracles will endorse so far what I say) there is no reason why I should either believe or disbelieve.

If we apply our criteria to the teaching of the spirits, we gain at once a momentous result. Their assertions go beyond our personal experience, and their testimony is not supported. Hence our criteria must be applied with unsparing rigour. Let us make the experiment, and see if the spirit-witnesses are not turned out of court. In the first place, do the spirits know what they talk of, and have we got that assurance? I cannot think that we have. No

doubt, being intelligent, they are aware of their immediate condition, but does their knowledge go much farther, and, if so, how far? May not much remain unknown to them which, if they knew it, would convict them of error? These questions cannot be answered, and hence (since we ourselves know nothing of spirit-land) we can in no way test the ignorance of our spirits, nor can we have trust in their information. This is enough, and yet even this is not all. We not only cannot gauge the defects of their observation, but we have a positive ground for distrusting their intelligence. From the data we possess we have been forced to conclude that the understandings of these spirits are lower than our own.

So far we cannot tell if the spirits are really well informed; and to this may be added a subsidiary doubt. When we communicate amongst ourselves we are sure that our system of signs is trustworthy. If it were not so the practical results must show it; and this is in the end the sole test that we have. But when we converse with spirits have we got that assurance; and if not, do we possess any other? I will only allude to this doubt in passing, and will proceed to state a more fatal objection. If the spirits really know and are able to communicate, does it follow that they are *willing*? May we suppose that they are truthful? We must not do so without reason, and have we any reason? With this question we arrive at a very noteworthy feature. It is admitted that some spirits are fraudulent and mischievous, but the spiritualist asseverates that others are sincere, and that *he* can winnow the false from the true. And, half dazed by his audacity, I can only reply, Produce your criterion.

*Human* testimony is sifted in part by our knowledge of the matters alleged, in part again by our experience of human nature, and by special information as to the character of this witness. The absence of a motive or a tendency to lie must either be shown or must else be assumed on a general presumption. And this is our criterion. But when we come to the spirits we can apply it no longer. We have no knowledge of our own by which to check their state-



ments, and, what is worse, we know nothing about their characters. We do not know their moral natures; and whether they have or have not a motive to deceive us, we are utterly ignorant. It is not too much to say that if they were spirits of evil, whose happiness was staked upon fooling us men, we might (so far as we know) have no means for discovering it. Such an hypothesis is baseless, I quite admit that; but the hypothesis that the wish and the tendency of their natures is (where we are concerned) to speak what is true, is just as baseless, just as idle. We know nothing, and how then are we right to believe anything? We have no light and no test. 'But we are not to trust all spirits. There are good spirits as well as bad, and they tell us whom to trust.' *O sancta simplicitas!* It is always the vilest cheats who are the only honest men. It may be otherwise in spirit-land, but perhaps it is worse. And if there are good spirits, we at least cannot distinguish them. Nor would the idea of collecting a mass of spirit-evidence, and of so using false statements to eliminate each other, be any less fallacious. We do not know that our sources of evidence are independent, and, if they were, there might be tendencies which produce the same lies on different occasions. We need not dwell on these objections. The plain fact is this—that human testimony is received upon certain assumptions, and that with a spirit these assumptions can no longer be made.

But the spiritualist may deny that we have any need to make them. He may say that our experience gives us a test. The spirits tell us things that we ourselves verify. They are found intelligent and faithful in some things, and that gives us a reason to trust them beyond. But this conclusion is irrational. If a spirit perceives events through a wall and in the distance, if he sees what is hidden in the past or in the future, and we verify his competence, yet this, as we have seen, does not warrant him capable of any higher knowledge. He might yet be a witness not competent to speak of the things of spirit-land. His capacity is not established by the strange and unusual. It is when he proves himself our equal in the highest that we have, that

we should think him on our level. It is surely not by passing beyond my understanding that another goes the way to convince me of his. And the same with their truthfulness. By what logic does it follow that, if they speak truth in one thing, they will do it in another? That is the argument by which dupes are plundered perpetually. Suppose a spirit ready to deceive (and we admit many are ready), would he not first be found faithful so as to gain our confidence? It is only when we can assume that there is no other side to the character, and no other motive lurking in the background, that we can go from true in part to true in everything. And of course with a spirit this assumption is impossible.

To sum up the result:—When a spirit bears witness of things beyond our world, we know neither his ability nor his honesty, and we have no kind of presumption in his favour. We have seen before that, apart from the testimony of the spirits, we must regard them as not bodiless and may suppose them mortal; and their testimony also has proved to be worthless. Nothing now remains save the bulwark of spirit-identity, and if that goes, the last defence of spiritualism has vanished. This bulwark at first sight looks somewhat imposing. We recognize in the spirits our dead friends and relations, and so are sure that they survive. But if they survive, then we also shall not perish. We are all immaterial and all immortal, and with a destiny beyond the grave which may fill us with hope. But, unfortunately, the edifice has no foundation. We do not know that these spirits really are our friends, nor can we hope in consequence ourselves to survive. And if we knew this, yet our friends may be material and mortal, and our heritage not joy but sadness and foreboding.

It would be a task alike ungrateful and useless to argue against that which some of us call 'instinct', against the assurance of love and the impulse of affection. And to those who are persuaded that they converse with their dead my reasonings are not addressed; but to others I must show the flaws in the evidence. Even here amongst ourselves and in the daylight of the sun such a proof is not

infallible. If, in spite of evidence, the mother can find her long-lost son in the gross palpable impostor, that I think should make us hesitate. In the deceitful twilight of spirit apparition we must not hope that our instinct will be proof. To satisfy others we must admit the chance of illusion and reasonably discuss the case on its merits. I will attempt to lay down the tests we should apply. Identity is a subject not easy to handle, and the identity of a spirit with a deceased human being presents several difficult questions. And the spiritualist has, I think, advanced gaily on the surface without much thought for the pitfalls which make it unsound. Hence I must ask the reader once more to have patience, for, if we hurry the discussion at this point, we are lost.

How do we know here on earth that the man whom we recognize is really our relation? And, first of all, how should we prove it in a law court? We should show in the first place the identity of his mind, as evinced by memory and by sameness of habits, and in the second place we should point to the identity of his body; but on reflection we see that this latter carries everything, and that the sameness of body is the goal of our argument, to prove which indirectly or directly they all would be aimed. And the reason of this is (as we shall see lower down) that we cannot show, except by way of the body, the continuity of the soul. If the body exists it must exist continuously; but the continuous existence of another man's soul can be shown, if at all, only by a circuitous process. I shall return to this hereafter, and at present will but point out that for legal purposes the identity of the body proves the sameness of the man. Now the body is, of course, a material thing, a thing differing from other things, and puzzling us much by its change and its sameness. But we need not notice the special problems which it offers, and may confine ourselves to the question, how we show the identity of a material object. Is it enough to make out that it seems to our tests just the same as it was? No, that is not enough, for it shows no more than sameness of *description*. The identity of this or that material object depends also on the continuity

of its existence. If, for instance, we could know that a coin or a diamond had been (temporarily) removed from our universe, then no test we could apply would ever prove it was the same and not another just like. It is unbroken existence, undivided persistence, that makes the identity of a material object.

Hence if we proved the continuity of our relation's body we should prove his identity. But strictly to prove continuity is impossible, and we must content ourselves with a certain probability. We try to show that at the end of various intervals a body like our relation's was present in the world, and that if, during those intervals, the body had been changed, we must have been aware of it. We try to prove that the facts are in favour of continuity, and that nothing suggests an opposite hypothesis. But we may meet a great obstacle, for throughout some part of the time in question we may be able to get no sort of direct evidence. Still our case is not hopeless. We are able to add an indirect argument. First, our relation is not known to be dead or elsewhere, and the man before us is like what our relation would have been, and his story is credible—hence he *may be* our relation. And now, secondly, we produce our indirect proof. There is no one save our relation who could appear so like him, and therefore our man *must be* the person we seek. This decides the question.

Now our *must be*, it is obvious, rests on an assumption. We suppose ourselves to have such a knowledge of the world that we can be sure there is no facsimile of our relation, or, if there were, that we should get to know it. We see the nature of our argument if we take the case of twins, so like as hardly to be known apart. If these twins, A and B, had been absent for even a moderate time, then, if no evidence could be got to show continuity, it might be utterly impossible to prove the identity of A or B. And this shows us the assumption which we commonly use. No one save a near relation could ever be so like, and, in this case before us, no such person is possible. Our assumption, perhaps, may be no more than probable; but we must employ it, or have no opinion at all. And, whether

probable or certain, it rests entirely upon our experience of this world.

If we now return to spirit-identity, we shall find that we have got an important result. We cannot use for a spirit the same sort of proof that we use for a man. Continuity of body cannot be shown where no body exists, or where it exists ethereally and not in our world. And to argue from the exclusion of all other bodies is equally impossible. Hence, where we have no body material as mine is, the legal evidence for identity is quite out of place. This, I think, must be admitted, and the question is, Have we among human beings any *other* way of proving identity? I confess I cannot find one. Let us suppose that A and B have two wives C and D, and, though the bodies of C and D seem still the same, that their souls are transferred. In this (impossible) case could we get to know the identity of their souls? I do not think that we could. A man might say, 'This woman C is no longer my wife; she is at present not the same with the woman I married.' But nothing could entitle him to find the soul C in the body D. For myself at least, I do not see what evidence could establish that point. And if so, we must say that without the same body the same soul is not provable.

We have so far made good that the identity of a spirit is not capable of the proof which we use amongst men. That, however, may not matter. The removal of the body removes a difficulty. 'Our relation's soul is hard to recognize, when we know that his body is possibly elsewhere, and itself with a soul. But death strikes out the old body, and simplifies the question, so that knowledge becomes possible.' A spirit appears to us like our relation in appearance, disposition, and knowledge of facts. That is really all the evidence, and is it enough? If we strike out the body it is the same evidence that we used to establish human identity, and so far it is valid. But unfortunately it stops at a fatal limit, for it wholly leaves out the indirect proof. We assume with a man that no other could resemble him, since we know our own earth and the nature of its people. Without this assumption the inference is

broken, and with a spirit the assumption would rest upon nothing.

The identity of an individual, corporeal or otherwise, does not consist in sameness of present description. If the same soul lived twice at the interval of a century, would it really be the same? Or must we not add continuity of history? But how with a spirit is such evidence possible? Shall we venture to assert that none could really be so like unless he were the same? Think for a moment of the unknown region of spirit-land, and then judge if such assumptions are better than fancies. It would be easier if we knew that no spirit was anything but a man deceased. It would be easier, but still unlawful. For to us the other world is buried in darkness, and we know nothing of the dead, how they are changed (it may well be) and sadly translated. The proof that we seek for would have to lie in this, that after certain signs we should be forced to exclaim, 'My kinsman or the devil.' And we cannot reach this alternative. And moreover, even if the alternative were reached, we could not exclude the latter supposition. 'The spirit may be a devil . . . and abuses me to damn me.'

We are too ignorant to assume that from spirit-land no counterfeit would come to mock us. We cannot tell that no spirit save the soul of the deceased could so put on his knowledge and wear his semblance. It is all wild imagination. If I asserted that each man has got his double in spirit-land, sometimes seen during life, and which, lingering after death, amuses his kinsfolk, I should say it on grounds to the full as convincing. We cannot tell that no spirit is like our relation; we cannot say that no spirit is able to personate. But would they do it if they could? Well, we do not know their motives, and we cannot say they would not. Nay, there is some evidence that they do. The spiritualist himself teaches counterfeiting spirits, fraudulent and mischievous. True, he adds that we detect them by their own non-success, and by the help of those others, not fraudulent or (perhaps) still undetected. But, as we saw, this is illusory. Since we know nothing beforehand, the chances seem even that *all* of them are fraudulent;

against the admitted fact that at least *some* do personate I see nothing to be set, and I will leave the reader to draw the conclusion. Nor will it avail to urge the extent of the deception, and to object that the scale is too large for treachery. It may be, for all we know, easier to cheat many than one. And if, finally, I am met by the personal appeal, Would not you after continual intercourse, after constant communion, be satisfied yourself that you held converse with the dead?, I must reply that I cannot say what would stagger my reason and break down my intellect. But that is really not the question. The question is, what is reasonable for a man to believe; and I have tried to show the conclusion which reason will justify. I do not despise feeling, but I cannot argue against it.

We can never know that we really converse with our relations, and hence we cannot tell that we ourselves shall survive. But even this is not the end. If we did recognize in the spirits our friends that are dead, that would not prove them or us immaterial or immortal, or exempt from worse than earthly afflictions. It would not prove them wholly immaterial, since they probably, as we have seen, have material bodies. Nor would their identity weaken that probable conclusion, for a soul might have one body and then, again, another, possibly without any loss of identity; or, if identity were lost, yet at least to us the appearance would remain. 'Do you say, then, you admit that the soul is transferred, and is therefore independent?' Nothing need be transferred. The materialist holds soul to be a function of the body. Well, then, obviously if you were to destroy my body, and after a thousand years make another one like it, my soul must (so far as my consciousness is concerned) start afresh without a break and maintain its identity. When the pressure of the bone is removed from the brain, the consciousness begins from the moment of the blow; and if the patient were not trephined but destroyed, and ten thousand years hence a man like him were made, then, after an operation ten thousand years hence, the consciousness would start from the moment of the injury. You may object that the soul would not really be

the same, and I will leave that undiscussed, but it would seem to you the same, and it would reply to the tests to which your 'spirit' replies, and after all you would be wrong if you called it immaterial. And I argue from this that you are likely to be wrong when you deny that the spirit has a perishing body. You have given nothing to weigh against that general probability, which we saw was against you. Another body like in function explains all the facts, and a bodiless principle seems no better than a phrase.

Hence our relations are material, and are probably mortal, and we can draw no hope from their existence after death. They may say that they progress, but why should we believe them? In the first place, we have seen and conversed with but a fraction, and the rest are not known. Then, again, we cannot tell that our witnesses do not lie. And if they speak what they believe, how much do they know? How much of their own prospects, how much of all those creatures whom perhaps they never see? Their own intelligence is not high, perhaps now it is decaying, and their own degraded future they cannot forecast. Were they doomed to extinction, to mouldering dotage, even to something unspeakable, why suppose that they would know it? And there is an ominous circumstance. The souls of great writers, when called upon, indite, if not fustian or drivel, the saddest commonplace. And we reject them as counterfeit, but perhaps we are wrong. Perhaps our Shakespeare after all and our Bacon and St. John were the genuine men, travelling ignobly through decrepitude to final dissolution. This is a fancy, but not more fanciful than the rest. And so we must say that, if our apparitions are really the deceased, they do not open the future nor give us hope that their lives will be long or desirable. And in the face of this result (if that were all that we had) there would be comfort in the death which gives peace in the grave. It is much to know the worst, and if we can say, "They are not troubled, for their poor private selves death is sleep everlasting, and the higher life which they lived lives on through their labour", then that worst is not bad. But to be sure that they exist, but not for how long, really



to know nothing of the what and the how—it is this which makes death hideous. We are a prey to each 'lawless and incertain thought', and, indeed, 'it is too horrible'.

Let us collect the result of our long discussion. We have seen that, even if we hold converse with the dead, yet that gives no hope of bliss beyond the grave, either for ever or even for a very little while. And we have no right to believe that we hold this converse. And, if we commune with intelligences, yet we have no right to take anything from them on trust. Further, though we may admit an intercourse with souls, yet these souls are not any more spiritual than we are, nor are they any less material or more immortal; nor again are these objections dependent one upon the other, but any one by itself is dangerous to spiritualism. Still, I fear that the result may be a feeling of too much. I fear the spiritualist may reply to these doubts by a counter-charge of general scepticism. I have indeed laboured to distinguish our ordinary inferences from the reasoning employed to establish the spirits, and it is on those distinctions that I would take my stand. Still, that the spiritualist and myself may each understand the other, I will endeavour to meet a possible objection. 'On your showing,' I may be told, 'though the spirits did exist and with a message for ourselves, yet they would have no way of delivering their tidings—or rather, though they delivered them, we never should be sure of it, or at least ought never to accept their testimony. And this position is absurd and is palpable scepticism.'

I answer that I fail to perceive the absurdity; and while I defend an opinion, not formed for an occasion, but embraced long ago and tried by some wear, I would beg for a little the attention of the reader. I deny utterly the right claimed by the beings of one sphere to hold communion with those of another. I see no reason to expect any converse of the kind, nor is it incredible or unlikely that, if such converse took place, there should exist no means for the accrediting of testimony. We must not first make our fancies the measure of the universe, and then exclaim that the facts are absurd and impossible.

There is, of course, a prevalent and obstinate idea that signs and wonders can accredit a messenger, and that marvellous works can entitle a spirit to claim our belief for his depositions. The idea is most natural, but is a mere anachronism. No revelation can be authenticated by miracle or testimony, or by anything else but internal evidence. I do not mean that, if in England there now were a spirit both able and willing to be in earnest with miracles, to strike dead his detractors, to send disease on the unfaithful, and prosperity and health upon all his worshippers—that such a spirit ought to fail in establishing a following. For he could not fail, and religion (in this sense) would be rational, and atheism would be folly, and indeed would not exist. But then this is not the question. The question is whether anything which that spirit could do would make him a witness whom we ought not to doubt. When he told us of things quite beyond our experience, could we ever have a right to accept his bare word? And, if we reflect, we are compelled to answer in the negative. For in the first place we have no means of checking his account, and in the next place it is impossible to be sure of his mind, his ability and his desire to tell us the truth. It is impossible, since we see (or can know that we see) but a fragment of his nature, and the inference from this fragment to the whole of his being is quite illegitimate. And if I am told, ‘But we know that his strength is irresistible, and we therefore should believe’, I can only reply that this is barbarous and childish, a survival from the logic of the primitive savage. If we believe this, we should hold that Mahometan fire-arms are a proof that Gabriel’s feather wrote the *Koran*, or that the Athanasian Creed may be demonstrated by the power of Cockle’s pills. But what is good for the negro is not so good for us.

No convincing revelation can now be made to us which is to stand on anything but internal merit. A revelation of this sort is by no means incredible, but what does it mean? It means that our souls are so assisted and enlightened that we perceive of ourselves that the testimony is true. The testimony, in other words, is not taken *as* testimony, and

may not even bear that character, but is held on its merits as evidently true or certainly to be inferred. That is not impossible, nor unreasonable, nor even improbable. But an external revelation is a mere anachronism; it may weigh with the foolish and may persuade the superstitious, but others will not easily come to embrace it. And if religion is to depend on external evidence, then there can never be a religion for the most educated men.

Against the religion of the spiritualist, if we take it at its best, against his conception, that is, of the true aim of the soul and of its duty towards God, I have nothing to say. He stands far above the common level of orthodox Christianity, and if I thought that this article would weaken his persuasion, that would cause me regret. And I wish the spiritualist to understand that my objections are not aimed at his practical doctrines. They are directed against his forecasts of our personal future, which, if true, could make no difference to our duties, and which he rests upon evidence entirely worthless. His premises could never establish his result. It is not his fault or his spirits' fault, but it lies, I am convinced, in the nature of things, that no proof of the kind which he attempts is possible. And if he replies that a religion must be something for the people, and that what to me is but a puzzle to them is demonstration, I must answer that I could not even for the sake of religion take part in his deception.

I will not assert, if we were quite sure of the truth, and were sure that our fraud would but tend to support it, that then we might not say, 'Since the people must be deceived, be it ours to deceive them wisely and well'; but since the case is far otherwise, and since our fraud would take its place amid the uncleanly struggle of superstition and priestcraft, we ourselves must be defiled if we countenance deceit, and admit bad evidence for true conclusions. This in any case must be true, and there is something besides. Who is able to guarantee us against these spirits? They are not saying to-day what they have sometimes said before, and who knows but hereafter they may say something else? I do not trust these spirits however fairly they may speak.

And I confess when I look back upon the annals of the supernatural, I cannot feel quite easy. It may be very well to say, 'I have found no devil yet. I have no fear of bogie.'<sup>1</sup> The orthodox 'Bogie', I agree, if alive, is now quite decrepit; but we should remember from whence he had his origin. There are still terribly low strata in our poor human nature, and in the end I am afraid they might light upon a stratum of answering spirits. From the cold fires of the defunct some devilish phoenix might arise to hinder us, and to force us to victories which are too like defeat. We have a great deal to do, a great deal to make war against, and we feel that we have had enough of spirits. So long as any human duties are left to us, we are something too high to be their battle-field or their play-ground. But if we dally once again with superstition, if we leave the honourable daylight and once more follow after voices from the dark, then the sun has gone back on the dial of humanity.

Spiritualism has had so far a very easy game to play. Its facts have been canvassed much more than its inferences, and it has for the most part enjoyed a monopoly of interpretation. But when its data are established (if they ever are established), that monopoly will go, and it will, point by point, have to battle with rival hypotheses. I shall have succeeded in my purpose if I have shown that that battle is hardly begun.

#### NOTE

The following extract from a letter written by the author on February 1, 1922, may be of interest.

'I don't want to write about spiritualism generally. What I want is to correct a mistake which I made in writing, as if what is called spirit-identity could not be shown to exist by *any* evidence. I have written for myself an abstract of what I think is correct now, but I can't, I fear, make this interesting generally, and doubt if I shall now try to do more. Certainly I dislike spiritualism very much, but of late years there has been evidence of much better character, though I have read little of it. I cannot see any reason to think that any new religion can ever be built on spiritualism.' The

<sup>1</sup> *Spirit Identity*, p. 97.

'abstract' was begun, but not continued, and is too fragmentary for publication.

Another reference to this subject will be found in *Essays on Truth and Reality*, 440, footnote, where he says:—

'What I myself wrote on this head some time ago (*Fortnightly Review*, 1885) is, I recognize, one-sided and unsatisfactory; but it contains doubts which are far easier to ignore than to remove. For instance, to discuss the question of the identification of a "spirit", without any regard to what is involved logically in the identification of a man, seems to be still the common way, and to myself it still seems to be ridiculous.

### XXX

## ON THE TREATMENT OF SEXUAL DETAIL IN LITERATURE

*Note.* The following article was written in 1912, at a time when the flood of erotic novels had not yet swept over the English reading public. Some harsh and, as he thought, unjust strictures on certain books had called the author's attention to the subject, and he thus briefly recorded his own views.

On re-reading his article some years afterwards, when already a change had taken place in current literature, he thought it necessary, in order to guard against misconception, to add the Note which is printed below (see pp. 626-7).

THE question as to the right of the novelist to present and dwell on sexual detail has, I understand, begun to trouble us. In this dispute it is only too easy to take a side, but to judge intelligently requires more than mere personal bias. And if we are to form a reasonable decision, we must at least make some attempt to understand. It is in aid of any such attempt that these pages have been written. To freedom from bias on my own part I make no pretence at all. I should be false to all the tradition of my life, such as it has been, if I were not wholly on the side of liberty in science, literature, and art. The feelings which I entertain towards any part of the public, which I am forced to regard as enslaved and hypocritical, I need not express. My object here is, so far as I can, to set out the principle on which any rational discussion must be based.

I will for the moment imagine myself to be a novelist attacked and blamed for treating of sexual matters. And I will first state briefly, and merely in general, the real essence of the attack, and next will explain the proper line of defence. The attack will be developed not quite as it is usually made, but as it must be made, if it desires to be logical and consistent.

(1) It is a recognized law that all ideas have a tendency to work themselves out into personal emotion and action. This law obviously holds good in the case of amatory sexual

ideas. However they are suggested, these ideas tend to develop themselves within me into emotional disturbance, and this disturbance tends to carry itself out in action. Hence, except possibly in some situations of actual married life, no amatory suggestions of any sort or kind can fail to be dangerous, and therefore none can be allowed. And it is not novels merely which here are concerned. All study of anything sexual, even in science, must provisionally be held suspect. If for medical purposes such study is permitted, even this, except so far as necessary, is not excusable. But, in any case, for any one of the general public all scientific knowledge of sexual matters must be forbidden, whether in anatomy and physiology or even in the natural history of animals.

Next, everything in sculpture or in pictorial art which portrays, or even suggests, anything amatory must be excluded. The nude figure tends to become a mere pandering to lust. Further, in poetry no sexual love may be introduced, except perhaps in a guarded way the love of husband and wife, and possibly the amours described so chastely in the Song of Solomon. As for the novel (the theatre need not even be mentioned), we have something here worse even than poetry, because nearer to actual life. The novel, if not (like the *Morte d'Arthur*) full of 'bold bawdry', is at least replete with pernicious suggestion, witness Paolo and Francesca, and all those others whom romances have led to sin and to death spiritual if not bodily. And music so far as it is 'the food of love' should be peremptorily silenced.

The attempt to distinguish between loves of diverse kinds must be repelled as insidious. If the love is sexual, it is sexual; and sexual emotions and ideas tend normally to one end. They lead to desires which, except in matrimony, cannot be gratified without sin. Even though resisted, such ideas must unsettle or corrupt. And the one remedy is to banish whatever tends to excite them. Hence everything, everywhere, which suggests amatory ideas, must in principle be forbidden.

I have stated the objection to the treatment by the

novelist of sexual themes, in the form in which to my mind it is consistent and honest. As we usually find it, however, the objection seems to be more or less inconsistent and hypocritical. And before proceeding I will ask the reader to pause and to consider how far the above objection to sexual ideas has removed perhaps the greater part of our spiritual life. Seeking to cast out one evil spirit, is there no danger that we have left our soul well nigh blank, an empty space ready to receive other visitors?

(2) For indeed such is the result, to which the attack on novels seems necessarily to lead. And I will now go on to ask where the process, which has taken us to such a conclusion, has been mistaken.

Is, in the first place, its foundation, the general law of the development of ideas, to be condemned as an error? No, we must answer, the law in itself is perfectly true, but here it has been misapplied because misunderstood. For what the law really states is merely a tendency. Suggested ideas *tend* to develop themselves in me and with personal consequences. This, however, is only true so far as taken conditionally. It should mean simply that the ideas produce a certain result where they are not interfered with, so far, that is, as they are not obstructed by other ideas or contrary feelings and sensations, and not subordinated to impersonal interests. Obviously there are various ways in which to prevent undesirable disturbance of my personality by, for instance, sexual ideas. And obviously one way will be to embody these ideas in some impersonal setting, to attach them, that is, to an object or world of objects other than, and beyond, my mere individual life.

An idea associated with an interest which transcends my mere being, as this or that human animal, this or that creature as it lives and feels at this or that moment—will develop itself accordingly. The movement of the idea will take the direction of the interest. But this will, so far, prevent the idea from discharging itself in mere personal emotion and action. In short, so far as the mind is full of independent interests, these will attract ideas amatory or otherwise within their circle, and will so control them. It



is in the empty mind that ideas find room to work themselves out into personal disturbance.

What, we may now ask, are these interests of which we have spoken? We have first the habit of mind which is called scientific, the set desire to know and understand, and everywhere to arrive at truth. And it is surely beyond doubt that, where sexual matters are attended to in this way, whether in anatomy, physiology, medicine, the history of animals, or again in anthropology, the result, to speak in general, is not libidinous. All such studies of course *can* be used improperly and wrongly. But then, as so used, they certainly, so far, have ceased to be scientific.

Let us consider in the next place pictorial art. So far as this art really is pursued and loved as art, and not as something which is different, the same principle holds. The interest in the artistic effect controls the tendency of amatory subjects to disturb the personal state of the man who studies the picture. There is in the picture, to those who can appreciate it, the victory of the master over all the difficulties of composition and technique. And to the public in general there is visible, at least in some measure, the achieved beauty of the result. And beauty, as beauty, is always outside of and above and beyond any mere personal feeling. Beauty is not something which remains within me, as a mere condition and state of myself. It is there, whether in motion or at rest, as an object outside me and for me, or else it fails to be beauty. My interest therefore in what is beautiful must, if it is genuine, so far prevent any amatory ideas from taking in me what we have called a mere personal direction.

There are times, we must admit, where at least in the case of certain persons art fails to achieve its end, and then may in consequence merely disturb and excite. Art again *can* be even intended and used to produce this result. But here assuredly, so far and to this extent, we have not to do with genuine art.

When we pass on to poetry and to the novel, our general principle still holds, though it is more difficult perhaps here to apprehend it clearly. In poetry and in novels (it

will be urged) the reader is compelled to sympathize. If you do not actually have certain emotions, you have not understood. With amatory subjects, for instance, you have to feel yourself into the characters and the situations, and you have to feel yourself in them. Hence your own state will be amatory, and must so develop itself in you. If you think otherwise, it is because you merely deceive yourself. So runs the objection, but our answer is ready. It is true that you do, in reading, have to some extent amatory sentiment and sensation, but the extent and the power of this is bounded by a principle. The interest of the poetry as poetry, or of the novel as a novel, should dominate your feelings. It uses these as its material, it diverts, it limits and directs them to subserve its own purpose. And hence the subordination of the amatory ideas to an object beyond your mere personality controls (to repeat this once more) their development within yourself. The ideas are checked at a certain point, and are prevented from issuing in personal emotion, disturbance, and conduct.

With poetry, in contrast to the novel, it is far easier to realize this truth. The whole situation described in the poem may be said usually to be set in a kind of frame apart and remote from my actual life. Even where the poetry is lyrical, the emotion is felt to be idealized, raised above the being of the mere moment, and so made impersonal. I have never heard Tennyson, for example, denounced as a carnal poet. And yet he could write:

Last night, when some one spoke his name,  
From my swift blood that went and came  
A thousand little shafts of flame  
Were shivered in my narrow frame.  
Oh love! Oh fire! Once he drew  
With one long kiss my whole soul thro'  
My lips, as sunlight drinketh dew.

If here you cannot recall or imagine, and so feel the sensation more or less, the poetical effect is wanting. But if your ideas and emotions stray beyond the vision of Fatima's passionate heart and burning flesh, if they begin to wander

and to turn to a mere something in yourself—it is because you have lost hold of the poetry. The beauty which transported you beyond your private being, and which held and purified your individual feelings, has vanished. But it is by your own default if that, which in yourself has taken its place, has harmed you.

You may in this connexion recall the erotic sentiments warbled by young ladies in drawing-rooms. These flames have indeed in *one* sense tortured many, but I do not suppose that they have often inflicted moral injury. The imagined situation is detached from the actual environment. Whatever ideas and feelings are excited are felt to belong to another world, the region of 'mere music' and of 'only poetry'. The ideas and emotions therefore qualify and are appropriated by this other world, and their downward and outward irradiation and development in the singer and the audience are checked.

When we pass to the treatment of sexual matters in the novel the same principle which has guided us, still keeps its force. But not so (it will be urged), since the novel differs essentially from poetry, because it has to keep closer to ordinary life. In reply I might indeed ask where there is any fixed border-line between some poetry and romance in prose. But I prefer to deal more directly with the main point at issue. I insist that everywhere in literature, enjoyed as literature, our principle is valid. We have everywhere what we have called the impersonal direction and set of the interest. We are absorbed not in ourselves but by an object before our minds. It is this object which our ideas and our feelings colour, and by this object they are dominated and held. So being controlled, their development within our personal selves is obstructed. Detached from our own life they go on to realize themselves in that world which we only contemplate. And in this detachment lies the freedom which is bestowed on us by every form of genuine art.

To inquire into the nature of all that interest which is satisfied by the novel would carry us far. It is a question too wide for our present discussion. In a prose romance,

beside beauty of style we have the sense of adventure, the development of incidents and character, we have psychological study, we have the individual presentment of idealized human types, we have all that is meant (and I cannot here ask how much is meant) by the words comic and tragical. Into this new-born world which moves before us our thoughts and feelings are carried. The ideas and emotions that are aroused live not merely in ourselves. They are beyond us as the souls of those figures, whose acts and sufferings, whose sorrows, sins, and delights are for the moment more real to us than anything of our own. What we feel into those creatures we feel out of ourselves. And the tendency of our emotions and ideas to realize themselves to the end in our own minds and bodies is at a certain point limited. Our sympathetic entrance even into the last mysteries of carnal and aberrant passion should leave our hearts still pure. For we are in the hand of that Ideal which, so long as we can serve it truly, will hold us unharmed.

It is possible, we all must agree, for an artist not to succeed. The painter, the poet, or the novelist, in introducing sexual material, may have failed to keep the detail duly subordinate. Hence, instead of qualifying the main interest, this detail may break loose. It may remain no longer bound to the service of the artistic purpose. And, thus set free from the object before us, the sexual ideas and feelings, no longer checked, may develop their natural process in ourselves. Such a result, however, where it happens, is due not to art but to art's failure.

But more commonly, far more commonly, the failure is in ourselves. To take and to enjoy art and literature for what they really are, is not given to all of us. During early life (I cannot here ask why) this defect may more or less be expected. The outbreaks, for instance, caused in boys by the reading of tales of piracy and of other criminal adventures, are things of constant occurrence. And too many persons, in the same way, remain through all their lives children. The detachment of personal feeling, and its location beyond us in another world, is for such minds not

possible.<sup>1</sup> And reading of those who 'loved not wisely but too well', the result to those unfortunates may be the production of personal excitement and trouble, followed perhaps by a burst of indignation against the corrupt art and the immoral aims of the writer. For such persons the avoidance, perhaps the more or less wholesale avoidance, of painting, of poetry, of romance, and above all possibly of music, may be a moral necessity. Even for the average man there may be special forms of literature and art, the enjoyment of which should be deferred until he has taught himself to appreciate their true character. But what is not tolerable is that stunted natures should set up their defects as a standard. It is an outrage, it is sheer blasphemy, when they bring the divine creations of literature and art to the touchstone of their own impotence, their own animalism, and their own immorality.

Which is the higher being? Is it the man who strives to empty his mind of all that is sexual, to banish from his life all the beauty and all the romance that, based on sex, carries sex into an idealized world? Is it he who thus leaves his own nature at best vacant and starved, or opened perhaps to the inroad of that which turns it into 'a cistern for foul toads to knot and gender in'? Such a question surely cannot be answered in the affirmative.

The higher man surely is he who, loyally accepting his whole nature, seeks a positive remedy for its weakness. Such a man will know that his safety lies not in vacancy but in fullness. He brings, so far as in him lies, the entire tendencies of his being as an offering to that which is more complete than himself. He seeks generally to identify all his energies with a higher purpose. And in science, in art, and in literature, by setting even the lowest recesses of his nature before him as an object, he aims at personal free-

Sprüh'n einmal verdächt'ge Funken  
Aus den Rosen—sorge nie!  
Diese Welt glaubt nicht an Flammen  
Und sie nimmt's für Poesie,

so writes Heine in addressing a lady. The reverse process, alas! is but too familiar. There are too many who, understanding nothing of literature or art, degrade their pure radiance into personal inflammation.

dom. Those feelings and ideas, without which he would cease to be human, he transfers so far as he can to the keeping of the Ideal. In that all passion, every idea and emotion, becomes a thing sanctified and hallowed. They all are lifted into the realm of truth and of immortal beauty—and the man himself follows them. He rises, at least for that moment, into a sphere removed from the sway of those elements, which experience has perhaps taught him to fear as a mere part of himself.

#### A NOTE—ADDED AT A LATER DATE

Such is the justification in principle for the use of sexual detail, and all that remains is to guard against certain misunderstandings.

I have already explained that certain persons are not fit to appreciate art or literature where sexual detail comes in. The detail to them becomes something other than art or literature. Again some persons are inclined both in their lives and elsewhere to give too much attention to passionate sexual love, and still more persons to romantic love. Now even in the form of art and literature it is better for some of these persons not to have their attention too much centred on this subject. And it must be admitted against the novel that, retaining to a greater or less extent the aspect of a tale of adventure, it, to speak in general, is prone to exalt the adventurous aspect of sexual love, which is not really the aspect which in life possesses most moral importance. So that while it is perfectly true that literature, like art, can and does free us from personal desire, it is true nevertheless that, if one-sided, it does or may tend to exalt one-sidedly one side of human nature, and possibly depress others.

So much for the reader. And for the writer, while it is impossible to say that any subject is incapable of literary or artistic treatment,<sup>1</sup> some beyond doubt are excessively difficult to treat. And, while success in art justifies itself and is subject to no dictation from the outside, on the other hand there are subjects where failure is disastrous. The art that has failed to be genuine art can hardly be justified merely by its own good intention. The writer or painter who has aimed at his highest, and done his best to reach it, is justified, that is, morally, whatever he has done or failed to do. But he is justified only as a man and as to his own conscience, and his actual work may not be justified aesthetically or morally.

<sup>1</sup> e.g. Balzac's *La Fille aux yeux d'or*, and perhaps *Une passion dans le desert*.

Subject to this explanation I hold unreservedly to the position set out in the above article. I am wholly on the side of freedom in art and literature, and against those who would adapt them to the weaknesses, real or supposed, of young persons, or estimate their character by its effect on their own uncultivated or perhaps vicious personality.

# XXXI

## RELATIONS

### I

#### *Introductory Note.*

BETWEEN January and April 1923, and again during the first four months of 1924, Bradley was at work on the subject of 'Relations'. His original intention was to put what he wished to say into the form of an article for *Mind*.<sup>1</sup> But the work grew far beyond these limits;<sup>2</sup> and in February 1924 he decided to divide his treatment of the subject into two parts, so that it might be published in successive

<sup>1</sup> Compare the following extracts, all from letters to his sister:—

'I am decidedly better . . . and have been doing a very little work in arranging my ideas with a view to an Article in *Mind* perhaps . . .' (Weston, 17 January 1923.)

'The Article I want to write would have done well as another Terminal Essay in the Logic, only I wanted to get done with that. . . . It contains nothing really new, but its object is to insist on the ultimate unsatisfactoriness of any "relational" stage of experience—however necessary.' (Weston, 25 January 1923.)

'This thing I am preparing to write as an Article for *Mind* is logical and metaphysical. It is on the nature and position of "relations". . . . I am not ready to write yet, but am making an outline and notes. . . .' (Weston, 1 February 1923.)

'I am writing, as a preliminary, a full abstract.' (Weston, 1 March 1923.)

'I am writing a full sketch . . . I hope to have got this done in a day or two now. . . .' (Weston, 19 March 1923.)

'I have finished an outline and notes for that Article I want to write.' (Weston, 23 March 1923.)

<sup>2</sup> 'I have been looking . . . at the Sketch and Notes that I made at Weston, and rather fear that it will turn out a bigger job than I thought.' (Oxford, 9 April 1923.)

'I have been going over the notes of what I wanted to write when here last year. There is a good deal too much stuff, I fear, for an Article in *Mind*, unless I can cut it down—which I may be able to do.' (Weston, 8 January 1924.)

'I have too much material (which I got together last winter) and find a difficulty in dealing with it, apart from the actual difficulties of the subject.' (Weston, 4 February 1924.)



numbers of the journal.<sup>1</sup> He began to carry out the new plan and, though much interrupted and delayed by illness, had written 'about 20 pages' of the first part by April 8th.<sup>2</sup> But, after writing eight or nine more pages, he was forced to postpone further work on 'Relations', and turned his attention during May and June to the preparation of a new edition of *Ethical Studies*. He left England for a holiday in Switzerland at the end of June, and died on September 18th, shortly after his return.

Thus the projected article remained unfinished. The major portion of the first part (probably about three-quarters) exists in the draft referred to above. The manuscript (hereafter called C) fills twenty-eight and a half pages of a 'memorandum tablet'. Though much corrected in places, it is very nearly in final form, and is printed without substantial alteration below. But the second part of the article was never written, and not even a rough draft or outline of it exists.

Prior to his change of plan, however, Bradley had accumulated a quantity of valuable material in preparation for the *undivided* article as originally designed. Most of this preparatory work is contained in a black quarto notebook (hereafter called A). There are, besides, twenty pages of a manuscript (B) enclosed in an envelope, on which the author has written 'MSS. & Notes for Article'; and, lastly, a few entries in a red quarto notebook (W) to which both A and B occasionally refer. Many passages, taken from these sources (A, B, or W), are reproduced in the Appendix (pp. 653-76), and arranged, so far as possible, as notes supplementary to the text of the first part of the *divided* article (pp. 630-50). Nearly all the selected passages do in fact throw further light upon various points in this completed portion of the projected work; and many of them sketch problems which the author intended to discuss in the second part, and even foreshadow to some extent the arguments he would probably have used.

<sup>1</sup> 'I am arranging to make the whole thing divisible into two parts so as to be able to appear in *Mind*—to do this I am putting off the discussion of some serious difficulties to the latter part. The risk here is that I *may* find that I shall have to alter the first part after I have tackled the second.' (Weston, 17 February 1924.)

<sup>2</sup> 'I have done a little more and have actually written about 20 pages; but the subject extends itself, and, unless I limit it arbitrarily and unsatisfactorily, will become unmanageable in anything short of at least 50 or 60 pages, to say nothing of the difficulties. I may however be able to limit it so as not to be ashamed to publish, and this I must try to do.' (Weston, 8 April 1924.)

## II

### *Unfinished Draft of the First Part of an Article on Relations*

WE all, I think, are agreed that the question as to relations, their nature, truth, and reality, is both central and difficult. To deal with it and all that it involves within the space of an article is certainly not in my power. But the main view as to relations which I advocate I will attempt so far as I can in what follows to make intelligible.<sup>1</sup>

If 'relation' is not used merely as a vague term for any sort of connexion or union of that which is both one and many, but is employed in a stricter and more limited sense, then to me relations do not in the end as such possess truth or reality. Experience, so far as in a proper sense relational, I take to be in no sense either primary or ultimate. Such experience is necessary and is justified as a way of advance in knowledge; and if we fail to recognize this, we are led into fatal error. On the other hand, any relational view involves self-contradiction in its essence. It rests on a form of experience which is more primary and, in a sense, more ultimate—which form, though vitally implied in itself, it attempts to leave behind and supersede. And thus the relational view, while justified and more than justified in advancing, must fail in the end to reach full reality or truth. Its essential presupposition and support remains, we may say, throughout infra-relational, while the higher stage of a unity which at once includes and transcends mere relations is reached by no relational experience so long as that remains itself. Such experience, then, I take to be a makeshift aiming unawares beyond itself at an end, fulfilled in which it must lose every claim in its own right to truth and reality.

This consummation (I may perhaps be here allowed once more to insist) I take as an experience neither one-sided, nor abstract and negative. It is the complete realization of all our desires for truth, beauty, emotion, sensation,

and activity.\* It is not in detail knowable and it remains, if you please, inexplicable. But in its main positive character, as the fulfilment of every end and the complete reality of all partial existence, it is both knowable and certain. And since it is beyond any one kind of experience—feeling, thought, and intuition, sense, activity, and will—while it positively includes each and all of these, to identify it with any single one is of course ridiculous. Hence, when those who hold to an Absolute such as the above are set down as mere Intellectualists or as seekers in vain to find a universe in the blank nothingness of abstract identity, I must be permitted to doubt whether we have anything here which deserves the name of criticism.<sup>2</sup>

Relational experience, to return from this digression, is to my mind in no sense either primary or ultimate. It presupposes and rests on another mode of experience which, though itself also imperfect, has a better claim to such titles. And I will now proceed first to describe and contrast the main characters of each; and then, after entering into fuller detail, endeavour to deal with some points of difficulty.

The primary form of experience may, I think, be best called 'immediate experience' or 'feeling', and with regard to this I may be allowed to refer to what I have written elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> To limit the meaning of feeling to pleasure and pain I must take as quite indefensible. And if there ever is such a thing as one simple feeling, I will put that here on one side. I mean here by 'feeling' such a mode of experience of sameness and difference in one as is an awareness direct and non-relational of that which is at once one and many. If we may permit ourselves to speak here prematurely of a whole and parts, then in immediate experience the whole qualifies every part while the parts qualify all and each both one another and the whole. Thus extension and colour as they come first are not given as related. They are both in one, just as the contents of every 'this', 'now', and 'mine' come in one and make one with the

\* [The MS. reads 'truth beauty sensation and emotion and activity'. The reading given above is taken from earlier drafts in A and B.]

pleasure and whatever else belongs to their moment's feeling. And if we mean by 'given' here to imply a relation of object to subject, then we must certainly avoid the word 'given'. For immediate experience, taken strictly, is free from every kind of relation. The diversity contained in it directly qualifies and is qualified by the unity,\* just as throughout each single feature makes a difference to any other of the rest. We have here a mode of union where the category of Whole and Parts cannot as yet properly be applied, and where even the form of Predication must be used subject to serious reserve. But on the other hand we are in possession here of what to my mind is, so far as it goes, an indubitable fact.

There are some real difficulties to which later I shall have to return, but my next task is to show how the form of relational experience differs essentially from feeling. There are, however, some misunderstandings which, before proceeding, I will attempt to remove. I do not suggest that what I call feeling is in every sense ultimate, and that we can take such a mode of experience as itself, in short, absolute Reality. On the contrary, such a doctrine would be to my mind a radical and fatal error. The ultimate reality of the universe is not something merely below or above what appears. It must on the contrary hold within itself every variety of fact and experience; and wherever you can even suggest a more, you have failed to reach what is really ultimate. And so, dismissing the above error which in another form I have noted already, I will go on to mention some points where I am met by real difficulty.

Are we to maintain (i) that, in the race and in the individual, the stage of mere feeling is prior in the sense of coming first in time? Can we again (ii) say that at any time feeling did, or does, come to us pure—and by 'pure' I mean verifiable as such internally throughout each detail comprised in it? Obviously we can see at once that often, if not usually, this is not the case. Our feeling is one and is a whole, but none the less may contain pieces of relational

\* 'the [total] unity' [MS.]

matter, inside which the form of feeling is certainly not dominant. If we may so express ourselves, we here have clots present and contained in and belonging to a liquid whole, the general nature of which fails to rule within the limits of each. Within a state of feeling you thus often, if not usually, may have details which, though felt, are internally far beyond being merely felt. And hence to treat them as exhibiting throughout the general nature of feeling would be certainly wrong. Our one feeling taken therefore as mere feeling, we may say, is not pure, since its mere general nature fails to dominate pervasively. And I fully agree that the above doubts as to the priority and purity of feeling are a matter which will call later for further discussion.<sup>4</sup>

But what I fail to understand is the position of those who seek apparently to deny or ignore the very existence of what I call 'feeling'—an experience, that is, which, being more than merely simple, holds a many in one, and contains a diversity within a unity which itself is not relational. To take an ordinary sense-perception—say, for instance, that of a green leaf—as a unity which consists in one or more relations is to me to go counter to the plainest fact. And the same result to my mind is obvious when we look at some experience which is aesthetic or consider again any, no matter what, emotion. To attempt to deny that an emotion is one whole, or to treat its unity as consisting in no more than some relation or relations, I cannot but regard as really monstrous.\*

Or take that experience which at any and every moment, however little we attend to it, comes to us as the world in its character of 'this', 'now', and 'mine'. Is it possible to deny that we have here a feeling which contains a diversity in unity, however vague? Is it possible to maintain that this unity is no more than merely one or more relations? Obviously and undeniably, on the one hand, we can and do and must transcend the above unity. But, on the other hand, (in order) to be actual and real, surely there is nothing which can fail in some sense to be contained in it and

\* [The author intended to add a footnote with references.]

to belong to it, however much within its own further character it must also pass beyond. Thus every relation, to be even possible, must itself bear the character of an element within a felt unity—and apart from that is an abstraction which by itself is nothing. And feeling, we thus may insist, if not all in all, is the base and condition of the whole universe; and to fail to recognize this may be ruinous.<sup>5</sup> To forget on the other side to ask, with regard to every element in the world, in what way and how far, within its own special character, it passes beyond that existence which it shares with all else that is felt—may bring equal disaster whether in theory or in life. Here and everywhere the worst way in which to seek an escape from error is to throw oneself into the arms of some counter one-sidedness.<sup>6</sup>

Dismissing now for a time any doubts or difficulties with regard to feeling, as the immediate experience of many in one, I will go on to show the main difference when we pass to an experience which is relational. Both are alike in being ways that hold a diversity in unity, but in feeling the whole and the parts (if we may use that expression) qualify (we have seen) one another throughout. But such qualification, where you have relations, ceases in part to be possible. The diversity here, while still forming a whole, has hardened itself into a plurality of terms, each so far independent as to have become an individual with a being and character of its own. And hence to say anywhere here about the parts and the whole that any one thing really is the other leads to obvious contradiction. A relation (we find) holds between its terms, and no term (we find) can itself simply be or become a 'between'. On the contrary, in order to be related, a term must keep still within itself enough character to make it, in short, itself and not anything diverse. And again, while the relations are not the terms and the terms are not the relations, neither the terms nor the relations can make that whole, in which nevertheless we find them. For the terms and the relations (we have seen) cease as such to exist, unless each maintains

itself against whatever is not itself but is outside. And the attempt to find the required unity and totality in the terms and the relations taken somehow together must end obviously in failure. For this 'together' must bring in something more than, and going beyond, the experience if (*ex hyp.*) that is taken as relational. Or else, to gain our required 'together' and the fact of 'relatedness', we shall have fallen back on the old unity which we found in feeling. But such a mode of unity (we have seen) no longer holds when once our experience becomes relational.<sup>7</sup>

Relational experience must hence in its very essence be called self-contradictory. Contradiction everywhere is the attempt to take what is plural and diverse as being one and the same, and to take it so (we must add) simply or\* apart from any 'how'. And we have seen that without both diversity and unity the relational experience is lost, while to combine these two aspects it has left to it no possible 'how' or way, except one which seems either certainly less† or certainly more than what is relational.

Whether immediate experience, as feeling, itself already involves contradiction in its essence is a question with which later I shall endeavour to deal.<sup>8</sup> But I prefer first to set out more in detail the discrepancies inherent inseparably in all that is relational. Relational experience on the one hand is, I agree, unavoidable and is fully justified in its own place as a way of life and knowledge. But on the other hand I have to urge that it can claim no title higher in the end than that of a necessary makeshift.

In the detailed criticism, which now follows, the reader must expect to find little more than what already, I hope, has been in principle laid down.

(i) A relation both is and is not what may be called the entire relational situation, and hence in this respect contradicts itself.

(a) A relation, to be experienced and to be actual, must be more than a mere abstraction. It must be an individual

\* 'or [Ref.] apart' [MS.].

[Cf. Note A in the Appendix to *A.R.*]

† 'which seems [whatever else it may be] certainly either less' [MS.]

or particular fact, and, if less than this, it cannot be taken as itself.\* Now the experienced relational situation must—to speak loosely—be viewed as a whole which has parts. And on examination we find that the relation itself cannot be something less than the above whole and all the parts of the whole. For it is not merely the terms or merely a bare form of union between them. Merely with either of these, or again with both of them in the sense of each one, the actual relation is not there. What is still wanting to it to make it itself is what has been called ‘the fact of relatedness’. A relation to be actual cannot itself be less than all and everything that makes the entire relational fact.

(b) This on the other hand must be denied. For a relation *is* not its terms, but, on the contrary, it is between them. And though the terms may ‘enter into the relation’, yet, if they were nothing beyond it, they obviously would no longer be terms. A term (we have seen above) is as such not a quality. On the contrary, anything, to be a term, must itself be a particular or individual.

Certainly every content and aspect of the relational situation as an experienced fact may and must be taken as qualifying in some sense the situation as a whole; and, without so much as this, we cannot have a relation at all. But you cannot take the particular terms as thus qualifying the relation, even if you could take them, so far as they are particular or individual, as thus qualifying the whole. In short, to experience a relational situation as one whole and one fact, you must take it so that, as relational, the whole is not, and cannot be, qualified by its aspects or parts. The relation, as soon as and so far as the whole situation has become relational, has become no more than one of the parts. And to regard this part as itself the entire whole is an obvious absurdity.

Every actual experience is a unity of the diverse and may, speaking loosely, be taken as a whole with parts. But the unity, so far, is merely that which belongs to immediate experience or feeling, and taken so far is no more than

\* ‘as itself—[any more than if you tried to take it as without any terms.]’  
[MS.]



what may be called qualitative simply. And it is only when taken as no more than this, that you are able to assert the whole of its contents and its contents throughout of the whole. And the moment anything contained here is viewed as what is individual or particular, to that extent the above unity has been removed. But to have an experience as relational, you must have terms which are individuals and which therefore cannot qualify the former unity, but on the contrary so far destroy or supersede it. But when you ask for the unity, which in relational experience has come in and has taken the place of the unity so superseded—you find that there is no answer. There is no unity left, except by a tacit and illegitimate appeal to that which the relational view has discarded. You can have the terms, without which you cannot have the relation, only so far as (in order to have the relation) you abstract from the former mode of unity, on which (to keep your relation, which requires some unity) you are forced vitally to depend. And this is a contradiction in its essence insoluble, except by a further development of experience,\* and by the rejection of any claim made on the part of relations to possess ultimate reality or truth.

You cannot escape here from contradiction by an appeal to what may be called the diversity of respects. It is idle to urge that the terms are individuals only in respect of their relation and so far as they are related, while none the less, so far as they are taken otherwise, they still remain mere aspects of, and mere qualities in, the one whole situation. This attempt but transfers the dilemma into the bowels of each particular term. For, with such an internal diversity in each term, either the term has been broken and destroyed by the loss of its unity, or else, seeking to preserve that and so keep the diversity of respects together, you are none the less ruined. For you have now fallen back on what holds within the stage of mere feeling, and which has ceased to hold so far as the situation has become relational.

\* 'experience [into that which supersedes what can be called merely relational], and' [MS.]

And the failure only becomes worse if, for the plurality of respects in the situation itself, you seek to substitute the various ways in which we can look at it and regard it. For not only is the real fact itself given up here apparently as lost, but the problem of the unity of these diverse ways, in which one or perhaps a number of persons choose to regard the fact, still remains on our hands. And once more here covertly to fall back on an experience, which is itself not relational, is but once again, and in an aggravated form, to renounce all attempt at real consistency.

The whole result, which so far we have reached, may perhaps become even more visible when we pass on to consider another form of the same fundamental discrepancy.

(ii) Every relation does and again does not qualify its terms, and is and is not qualified by them. To state this otherwise, and in a way to which I will return—the terms and the relation must ‘enter’ one into the other, and yet again are ruined if they do so. You cannot (this is the point at present) alter one or both of the terms and leave the relation unaltered, or alter the relation without making a difference to the terms. But on the other hand unless, and except so far as, you are able to do this, you cannot think relationally. And to combine the above requirements without contradiction is impossible so long as relations are accepted as something which is ultimately real and true.

After what has gone before, we need not, I think, develop the above discrepancy in detail. A relation as actual is not a mere abstraction. It means a relational situation, which is an individual and unique fact. It means a unity qualifying and qualified by the diversity which it contains and which, like itself, can and must be called unique. But on the other hand, unless allowed to abstract from the above fundamental fact, no experience, which is in the strict sense relational, can exist. And to the question how the abstraction is compatible with the individual unity, which is no less essential, the relational experience has no rational answer. It claims tacitly a right everywhere, so far as a present purpose is served, to ignore some vital

aspect of its whole being, while attributing to some other aspect an independent reality. And its practice is to treat at its discretion anywhere as the essential fact what elsewhere, and to suit another end, it disregards and in effect banishes as something that does not exist. Relational thinking is and remains (I would repeat) a method which is legitimate and is necessary for our understanding of the world. But it pays for every advance by an inconsistency which is irremovable so long as we insist on its ultimate truth and reality.

We are not called on everywhere (I also am sure) to emphasize the difference between our abstractions and the concrete fact. It would be stupid, I agree, to insist everywhere that, with a relation and its terms, a change made on one side makes also a change on the other side. Any one, I suppose, can see, and can maintain\* that a man can still be the same man, though one or more of his relations have become different. And none of us, I presume, seek in practice to deny that a relation may remain the same, though those who entered into it, and still remain in it, have more or less modified their characters. For such alterations may—or again they need not—change what we are taking as the vital point here in some entire situation. But, on the other side, all of us (I hope) may agree, whether in theory or in life, that there is something which is too often forgotten. We tend to forget that, whether we like it or not, we have to deal with abstractions and to take our stand on partial aspects; and that these, however proper and right in one connexion and in one place, may none the less in another place be ruinously false.

Our one way of safety, whether in theory or in life, is (I presume) more or less to keep in mind the danger inseparable from our use of abstractions. Everywhere, I presume, when so called on, we should be ready to consider, and perhaps to agree that we are leaving out something required to make the whole and real truth—and to do this even where we cannot show and specify what particular aspect in a given case is lacking. Everywhere, in short, we

\* 'maintain [be ready to assert]' [MS.].

should be ready to recall that our judgements fall short of, and are subject to correction by, the entire truth and whole reality—however much for our present purpose we have a right to believe that such a correction would not be material.

I am not to be moved here by the charge of an insult offered to Common Sense. For not only in speculation, but in life, we must all be ready to affront that which somewhere, perhaps, in the name of Common Sense may claim our respect. Common Sense certainly should consist, and at its best certainly it does consist, in the emphasis everywhere, whether in theory or in conduct, on what may be called the main view—the view, that is, which mistrusts and keeps furthest from mere abstractions, and comes nearest on the whole to that which is entire and is sane. But Common Sense, taken (as too often it may be seen) at its worst, is in its essence a one-sidedness, which we must not be afraid to mark as stupid or even, perhaps, to denounce as immoral.

Concrete individuality, the ultimate inseparability of identity and difference, is in my view everywhere the character and the test of reality and truth, and no other view in the end but this to my mind is tenable. A sameness where there is no kind of difference has in the end no right to its name, and a diversity not based on identity is nowhere a fact. A distinction without some difference is neither actual nor possible, even if we hesitate to add that there is no difference without a distinction.\*

A sameness or a diversity which is merely 'numerical' is no better than an abstraction which is permissible only so far as it is found to be useful. And the same conclusion holds of an otherness, which denies that in the end its other is 'another of the same', and assumes that others are possible (and even exist) which differ in no respect but their otherness. Such abstractions, I would repeat, we have a right and a duty to use, if and so far as they help us. But they are indefensible, and they may be dangerous, if and so far as we mistake them for genuine truth and reality.<sup>9</sup>

\* I shall return to this point hereafter. [*Note by the author.*]

Reality, as the concrete identity of sameness and difference, offers a problem not soluble by any relational thought. We find there no rational answer to our inquiry of 'how in the end'; but we find there the question forced on us, only to leave us, if we accept relational truth as final, turning hopelessly in a blind maze of unending regress.\* Our dilemma as to terms and relations has been, I hope, so far both established and explained.† We have a right everywhere to make and to employ whatever assumption seems to aid us most to a better understanding of the world. Our assumption has been shown in the present case to involve a contradiction in its essence, and hence to admit of no defence if offered as ultimately true. For in the end it is not true that a sameness and difference in our terms and relations can be one-sided, separable, and independent. But I would repeat that, understood and used as a makeshift, good for a limited purpose, our assumption can claim what it is perhaps best to call 'relative truth'.

(iii) I will now deal briefly with relations, taken as what may be called 'external' or 'internal' merely. And, though at the cost of some repetition, I will show how such a distinction, if we insist on it as ultimately valid, involves us again in contradiction. It exhibits once more the discrepancy inseparable from all relational thought.

Every relation (unless our previous inquiries have led to error) has a connexion with its terms which, not simply internal or external, must in principle be both at once. And, if so, the above distinction, if you take it as absolute, will be plainly untenable. On the other hand, if understood and applied as no more than a useful makeshift, the above distinction may stand. When it has ceased to claim more than what may be called 'relative truth', it may be accepted as true.

I will first of all consider relations, taken in an absolute

\* See my *Essays*, pp. 240, 264 note. [*Note by the author.*]

† For comment on the attempt to escape by an appeal to the plurality of respects, or of the diversity of 'ways in which you can look at it', I would refer the reader to what has been already said on pp. 637 and 638. [*Note by the author.*]

sense as merely external or internal; and will then deal with the same distinction as confined to what is but relatively true.

What should we mean (I will ask first) by a relation asserted as simply and barely external? We have here, I presume, to abstract so as to take terms and relations, all and each, as something which in and by itself is real independently. And we must, if so, assume that their coming or being together in fact, and as somehow actually in one, is due in no way to the particular characters of either the relations or the terms. From neither side will there be anything like a contribution to, or an entrance into, the other side—or again to, or into, that union of both which we experience as a relational fact. Undeniably the fact is somehow there, but in itself it remains irrational as admitting no question as to its ‘how’ or ‘why’. Or, if you insist on a reason, that would have to be sought neither in the terms nor the relation, but in a third element once more independently real and neither affecting, nor again affected by, either the relation or the terms. This, I suppose, is the way in which relations have to be understood, if you take them as external merely and also as ultimately and absolutely real.

What (I ask next) should, on the other hand, be meant by a relation viewed as absolutely and merely internal? You, I presume, still in this case would continue to take the terms each one as, so far, in and by itself real, and as independent absolutely of any whole that could be said to contain them. And you would go on to attribute to the particular characters of the terms, as so taken, some actual relation or relations which you find, as you say, to fall between them. Something like this, I suppose, is or ought to be meant by a relation which is asserted to be real ultimately and internal merely.

The idea, I would add, that I myself accept any such doctrine as the above seems to myself even ludicrous.\* And to whom, if to any one, it should be attributed in fact, I will not offer to discuss. In any case, to assume it as the necessary

\* [‘seems baseless’ is written above ‘even ludicrous’ in the MS.]

alternative, when the mere externality of relations is denied, is (I submit) an obvious, if perhaps a natural, mistake.<sup>10</sup>

Such, if the above statement is correct, should be the meaning to be given to mere external or internal relations. And it remains now to show briefly that, if taken as valid ultimately, such relations must be rejected. For in both cases we are met by a fatal inconsistency. We rest, in each case alike, on abstractions which refuse to come together so as to realize that diversity in unity which belongs in fact to the relational experience. And, in each case, if we are to regain this admitted fact, there must be a covert appeal to an experience which is in principle non-relational.

With mere external relations (to take these first) it should be clear that what we have to start with are no more than abstractions. The terms, each as real by itself, are not actual facts; and the relation taken by itself is but one more abstraction. And from terms taken as in themselves unrelated, and from a relation not taken as itself their relation, there is no logical way to the union present in, and required for, the relational fact. What has to be accounted for has hence so far been simply ignored. And while we keep to our terms and relation\* as external, no introduction of a third factor could help us to anything better than an endless renewal of our failure. Without a diversity in unity, we must remain for ever outside of that which, on the other hand, we must admit as the relational fact. Or, to regain this, we may fall back blindly on a form of experience which in its essence is not relational. We may rest on a covert appeal to experience in the form of mere feeling, to help us beyond our mere abstractions to the result which we need. But any such appeal must be at once illegitimate and suicidal. For the unity of feeling contains no individual terms with relations between them, while without these no experience can be really relational. And, committed to external relations with a necessary 'between' and a no less essential 'together', we end in a bankruptcy, from which we seek in vain to escape by suicide.<sup>11</sup>

Passing on now to consider relations taken as internal relations [MS.]

merely, we can reach no better result. The terms here once again are no more than abstractions. Taken each as real independently, and apart from some whole, they are things which cannot be found to exist in any actual experience. And once viewed as real, each in and by itself, there is no way in which they could pass or be carried beyond themselves so as to generate a relation.

An actual relation, we may remind ourselves, must possess at once both the characters of a 'together' and a 'between', and, failing either of these, is a relation no longer. Hence our terms cannot make a relation by passing themselves over into it bodily. For in that event their individuality, and with it the required 'between', would be lost. All that we could have left would be another form of experience, now no longer relational, qualifying which directly our terms would have ceased to be terms. On the other hand, if, to remain themselves, our terms retain their character as individuals, there is no legitimate way (we have seen) to their union in fact. We are without the 'together', which (like the 'between') is essential if any relation is to be actually there.

And it is idle here once again to fall back on a real distinction to be found in our terms, and to seek once more to solve our problem by a division of respects. It is useless to urge that the terms really in one respect can pass beyond themselves, and by that self-surrender make the unity required for the relation, while none the less in another respect the same terms save the relation's character by still each preserving its own. Any\* such plea, we have long ago seen, would be futile (pp. 637-8). Far from solving the problem offered, it is but the transference of that problem still unsolved into the nature of the individual terms. The diversity between, and the union together, of the 'respects' taken within each term raise the old dilemma, still insoluble and still unavoidable if we keep to relational experience. And no attempt to show there how the same thing can at once remain within, and still pass outside, itself can in the end avoid self-contradiction—while to fall back on a covert

\* But any [MS.]



appeal to what holds at the stage of feeling is once more illegitimate and useless. It is, as we have seen, an attempt to meet the just claims of relational experience by a fraudulent offer of drawing on that which only within a non-relational experience can be valid.

Mere internal relations, then, like relations that are merely external, are untenable if they make a claim to ultimate and absolute truth. But taken otherwise, and viewed as helpful makeshifts and as useful aids in the pursuit of knowledge, external and internal relations are both admissible and can be relatively real and true. And the distinction made between what is intrinsic and extrinsic, or between what we call essential and (on the other side) accidental only,\* may not only be legitimate, but can in various degrees have genuine importance. The relations, obviously, in which a man stands, can be taken as due to his own character or ascribed, again, more or less to external facts and events. And to object to such a distinction, when confined within its proper limits, would be obviously mistaken and even ridiculous.

But the distinction holds just so far as we are able in practice to take the nature of our individual term as double. A term in the end (we have seen) can stand in no relation into which it itself does not enter. But on the other side, if the relation is not to be destroyed, the term's entrance cannot (we have also seen) be entire and made bodily. It must be no more than partial and confined to what we call 'a certain respect'. But the question as to how that part of the term which enters in is related to that part which remains outside leaves us (we may remind ourselves once more) with a final contradiction.

Still in practice, and for a limited purpose, you can divide your individual term, and take one part as what you call 'essential'. And so far as this division is made, the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic relations will hold. Wherever that part of your term which you select as

\* [The MS. here is very much corrected. It is possible that we ought to read 'or between what we call "really essential" and (on the other side) "accidental only and circumstantial"'.]

its essence remains outside of some relation, into which the individual term enters, the relation so far is extrinsic. And on the other hand, where the entrance of the term includes, and carries into the relation, the essence also as in one with the whole term, the relation here is intrinsic. But no such distinction, if I may repeat this, can have more than relative validity.

Your individual term is an abstraction always. It implies what we may call a selection from the concrete fact of the whole and entire experience. And the\* question in every case is as to how far your selection has been carried. How much of the fact, that is, has it abstracted and fixed within an individual term, and secured so that you can take it as your term's essence?† Any relation involved in‡ that result will be intrinsic. And on the other hand, where any§ relation goes beyond that special limit,|| it will belong to the term only so far as that is taken as in one with the whole relational fact, and will so far be but external. But the above abstraction, however much it may serve, must remain in the end indefensible.

Every term in every possible relation¶ is due to, and involves, abstraction. And the idea that, apart from its implication beyond itself in some whole, you could possibly, starting from any kind of term, pass in any way beyond its limits is to me a radical error.\*\* And a hard division, made

\* 'the [crucial] question' [MS.]

† 'essence? [What is the extent of that which has thus been made the essence of your individual term?] [omit?]' [MS.]

‡ 'involved in [and to be recovered from]' [MS.]

§ [Or 'where the relation'. Neither alternative is struck out in the MS.]

|| 'limit [made by your abstraction]' [MS.]

¶ 'relation [such at least is my view]' [MS.]

\*\* *Footnote on Similarity.*

The above will hold even in the case of suggestion by similarity—where from one idea we are supposed to pass directly to another idea like it, which it excites by similarity.

In the first place, the exciting idea (taken by itself) is not a fact, but an abstraction; for it comes and must come to us only as in one with the whole comp<lex> psychological fact of the moment.

And, in the second place, it is only because of the identity between itself and what it excites—an identity present as what we call a 'disposition' left

anywhere between what is internal merely and what is external only, together with the distinction anywhere drawn between (on the one hand) essence and (on the other hand) mere circumstance or mere matter of fact, cannot in the end be accepted. It may be justified in practice, I agree; but it cannot, I must insist, be offered as anything which possesses ultimate truth and reality.<sup>12</sup>

(iv) I will next take the question whether a relation is essentially single or plural, and will further ask if in any case its plurality can be more than dual. Deferring this latter point, we may anticipate the answer that a relation must be both single and plural, though to reconcile these characters without a contradiction is in the end not possible. And when we recall our previous result—that in every relational experience there must be terms and also their unity, and that this experience (we had to conclude) cannot in the end be justified—our present question may seem perhaps unnecessary. But the discussion of it may in any case, I hope, direct attention to problems at once difficult and important.

How far, and in what sense, does every relation (we may ask) involve what may be called a 'passage'? We have seen that a relational experience, taken in its strict sense, is beyond the stage of mere feeling and of mere 'inherence', and is in its essence discursive. It has to contain terms and a 'between'; and must it not also (we have to ask) involve a 'way' and a 'passage' in the sense of a going actually from one term to another? In the case of some relations an 'order' and 'direction' we find admitted to be essential, though in others this feature seems at least to be non-essential and at first sight even quite absent. Still, considering further, we are led to ask with regard to every relation, no matter of what kind, whether for its existence, if not also for its essence, a passage always is required, and what a 'passage' in the end must be taken to mean. Does it, not to mention anything more, involve at least the

by previous experience—that we are able to pass to the excited idea. The connexion once more will be through an implied totality. Refer to my *Logic*. [*Note by the author.*]

element of time, if not also of space; and are we to say that apart from at least one, or both, of these characters there can exist in the proper sense no relational experience—even if in what we call the ‘essence’ of the relation these characters can be ignored?

Such questions, we may all perhaps agree, are not easy to answer; and for myself they raise a further difficulty as to the precise form in which what is temporal and spatial appears, while experience is still at the stage of feeling and is below the level at which relations in the proper sense are developed. I cannot, however, even attempt to deal here with these problems, the importance and the difficulty of which I certainly recognize. And for our present purpose an answer to this question as to the final nature of that which in a relation we have called ‘passage’ is (I venture to think) not necessary.

We may content ourselves here by repeating that a relation in the strict sense is always an abstraction. The relation itself is not the entire fact of the relational situation, as actually experienced, but in every case omits and ignores more or less of what there is contained. And in the amount omitted relations can differ. Some can make a complete abstraction from what is implied in the aspect of passage with its order and direction, while in other relations more or less of this aspect is to be found, and is taken as essential to, and as meant by, the relation itself. But since the relation in no case offers us unabridged the entire fact of the relational experience, we here, I think, can leave unanswered this question as to the ultimate meaning and sense of ‘passage’. For some feature, which we take the actual experience to contain, can fail (we have seen) more or less to appear in, and make part of, the relation’s ‘meaning’ and ‘essence’.<sup>13</sup>

And in any case our former difficulty will remain unremoved. Every relation must contain a diversity in the form of individual terms; and, on the other hand, unless the relation is one, the relation is destroyed. And there is no way, we found, in which these characters can legitimately be combined. And we hence must here accept the

result that a relation must certainly be both single and plural, though to assert this conclusion as an ultimate truth is not permissible.

We may pass on to deal with a further question as to a relation's plurality. We\* have seen that, since there must be two terms, a relation at least must be dual. But a relation's plurality, it may be contended, in some cases is more, and can amount to what is called 'multiple'. But before I discuss this final point, I will ask leave, at the cost of a digression, to notice an objection which has been urged against what is called Monism. In at least some relations we find (it is agreed) an order, and a direction which is not reversible; and this admitted fact, since inexplicable by any Monism, raises against it an objection which admits of no answer.

The objection seems however, so far at least as I am concerned, to rest on a grave misunderstanding. It stops, in the first place, short of that, to which in principle it should be led. For not one kind of relation, but every and any relation, if taken as an ultimate reality, would (on any view such as mine) be fatal to Monism. And, apart from this, the objection seems to assume not only that all Monism is based on the fact of 'simple inherence', but that it also implies that in this experience we are to find ultimate and absolute reality.

Now, so far as my Monism is concerned, I take an opposite view. Simple inherence, if relational, is to my mind self-contradictory. And, taken as non-relational and in the form of mere feeling, any such experience must on my view fail to reach ultimate truth and reality. For nothing, I have urged, which is not all-inclusive and complete, can satisfy that want and demand, in which we find our criterion of Reality—a want and demand which to me obviously and plainly cannot be satisfied by mere feeling. Reality on my view is doubtless infra-relational, but doubtless again it is relational, and in neither of these characters is it ultimate. It is only in what is super-relational, and is at once neither and both of the above, that we can find,

\* And we [MS.]

I think, a Reality which is ultimate and absolute. And of course, if this conclusion is erroneous, my Monism is wrecked. But to ignore this conclusion, or to exclude it by some bare assumption, seems to myself not permissible.

And if I am told that in any case Monism, if it is to stand, must be able to explain, and to exhibit more or less in detail, the positive 'how' of the universe—that again is what I deny. On no conceivable view can, I should say, the world become explicable throughout; and some feature of the world left unexplained can serve to refute a general view only so far as it can be shown that, if that view were true, this particular feature should be explicable.\* But, once again, this is not a matter for sheer assumption.

And if it is urged, finally, that since relations of every kind are, in the end, no more irrational than is everything else there can be no reason for not accepting them all as ultimately real—I am at no loss for a reply. I have shown in the first place that relational experience has to fall back on a non-relational form of unity, and is therefore not ultimate. And even experience in the non-relational form of feeling I myself do not accept as ultimate reality. Nothing to myself is real ultimately but that super-relational unity of the One and Many, which is at once the consummation and the pre-condition of all and everything.<sup>14</sup>

To return from what I fear has been too long a digression, I will notice a further question as to the sense of a relation's plurality. This, we have so far seen, must at least be dual. But it has been urged by Mr. Russell that, beyond mere duality, we must accept relations which are multiple. Such a conclusion I have however not found myself able to accept.<sup>†15</sup>

\*                      \*                      \*                      \*

\* *App.*, Index, *s.v.* Inexplicable; and p. 556 [9th impression, p. 494].  
[*Note by the author.*]

† See my *Essays*, the Index, *s.v.* Relations. [*Note by the author.*]

### III

## APPENDIX

#### *Note on the Sources:—*

THE following account of A, B, and W is inserted here, since all the passages quoted in the present Appendix have been drawn from one or other of these sources. References to the original paging are given throughout for the convenience of future students who may desire to examine the manuscripts, should the latter eventually be accessible in the Bradley Library.

(1) 'A' contains about forty-six closely written pages. After an Index, the first entry begins on a page numbered 'p. 6', and seems in fact to be the continuation of three loose sheets of manuscript which were enclosed in the book.<sup>1</sup> This entry—obviously a rough draft of the beginning of the article—is interrupted on p. 14 by a note on the 'intuitive understanding' (a subject dealt with again on p. 43 and pp. 46–7). On p. 15 there is a draft for the treatment of a difficulty in regard to the primitive form of temporal and spatial experience, so as to meet a possible objection to Bradley's view (stated on pp. 11–14) that relational experience presupposes feeling.

Then follow entries (isolated or loosely connected with one another) which together cover all or most of the topics to be discussed in the article. Thus pp. 16–17, 22–4, and 34–45 are drafts (in different stages of completion) for the treatment of the distinctions between 'external' and 'internal', and 'extrinsic' and 'intrinsic' relations. On p. 24, and again on p. 45, there are drafts for a discussion (in connexion with 'extrinsic' and 'intrinsic' relations) of Hume's distinction between 'relations of mere ideas' and 'matter of fact'. Then, at the end of the entry on 'extrinsic' and 'intrinsic', there is a Note (p. 43, and again on p. 47 with a reference to the earlier page) that the article is to conclude 'with some general remarks about the relational view as valid, though not ultimately true, and how it is to be transcended', or whether the ultimate result is 'Scepticism'. On pp. 18–21 Bradley, starting with a quotation from Professor Alexander's *Space Time and Deity*, develops some of the main contradictions involved in relational experience, justifies his own description of it as a 'makeshift', and sketches and defends his conception of the 'one individual which is real and true'. There is a reference back to this passage on p. 55, where Bradley refutes the suggestion that asymmetrical relations disprove Monism. Pages 24 a, 25, and 26 show that every relation is both single and dual (involving a 'passage') and discuss whether (or in what sense) relations can be 'multiple'; and another treatment of the same subject occurs on pp. 32–3. Lastly, there are two different drafts (the first on pp. 27 a, 29, and 31, and the second on pp. 27, 28, and 30) for a discussion of the question whether relations differ in degree.

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<sup>1</sup> These loose sheets are numbered on both sides (1, 2, 2, 3, 4, 5), but one of the sides numbered '2' is a first draft of pp. 4 and 5.

Towards the end of A—possibly, though not certainly, later in date than the rest of its contents—there are two Sketches for an outline of the article.<sup>1</sup> Sketch No. 1 (pp. 49, 48, 51 *a*, and 51 *b*) is confined to the opening section—i.e. covers what would probably have constituted the first third of the *undivided* article. Sketch No. 2 (pp. 57, 58, 59, and 60) in some respects goes further. So far as concerns the opening section of the article, No. 2 is more elaborate than No. 1, mapping out in greater detail the questions that are to be discussed in regard to ‘feeling’.<sup>2</sup> Further, No. 2 contains an explicit statement that the contradictions in relational experience are to be ‘drawn out in detail later’ (p. 58). And it ends with a ‘Recapitulation’ (reproduced below, Note 8, p. 658) which is clearly intended to summarize the entire contents of the *undivided* article.

(2) It is possible—on the whole, perhaps, even probable—that in B we have a rough draft of the *undivided* article, to be identified with the ‘outline’, ‘full abstract’, or ‘full sketch’ mentioned in Bradley’s letters of 1923 and ‘finished’ by March 23rd of that year.<sup>3</sup> B presupposes and uses most of the contents of A—even, apparently, the two Sketches at the end of the book.<sup>4</sup> It seems to cover more or less the whole ground of the *undivided* article, though in two respects it fails to follow the order of exposition which the ‘Recapitulation’ implies.<sup>5</sup> For (i) B ends with the detailed criticism of relational experience—whereas the author’s intention (to judge by the ‘Recapitulation’) was to revert to the question of the ‘purity’ and ‘priority’ of feeling, and to conclude the article with a re-statement of his view that ‘what is ultimately real must contain, and also go beyond’ both feeling and relations. And (ii) the passage in B (pp. 6–10) showing that, and why, feeling ‘does *not* (as it is) contradict itself’ comes *after* the general exposition of the self-contradictions inherent in relational experience—not *before* it, as the ‘Recapitulation’ would lead us to expect.<sup>6</sup>

But the identification of B with the ‘outline’ mentioned in Bradley’s letters is far from certain. For a comparison of B with C<sup>7</sup> shows that nearly all the contents of the former are reproduced in a fuller and more final

<sup>1</sup> There are four unmistakable references to B in these Sketches, viz. on pp. 51 *b*, 57, and 58 (*bis*). But the exact date of B is uncertain; and in any case the references may have been inserted long after the Sketches were written.

<sup>2</sup> Some of these questions are dealt with in an entry on pp. 52 and 53; and the author has inserted cross-references between these pages and pp. 58 and 59 of Sketch No. 2.

<sup>3</sup> See the extracts quoted in the Introductory Note (above, p. 628, n. 1).

<sup>4</sup> In spite of the references to B, which these Sketches contain (see above, n. 1).

<sup>5</sup> There is nothing to suggest that the ‘Recapitulation’ is of later date than the rest of Sketch No. 2.

<sup>6</sup> See below, Note 8, pp. 658 and 659.

<sup>7</sup> C is the unfinished draft of the first part of the divided article: see Introductory Note, p. 629.



version by the latter. It is true, no doubt, that nothing is said in C to show why it is impossible for 'finite beings in a world of change' to rest satisfied in feeling; that certain 'doubts as to the purity and priority of feeling', as well as the question whether it 'involves contradiction in its essence', are set aside in C for later discussion;<sup>1</sup> and that, on the other hand, these subjects are sketched, more or less fully, on p. 4 and pp. 6-10 of B. But these omissions or postponements are obviously not incompatible with the view that B is simply an earlier draft of C—in other words that B is an 'outline' not of the *undivided*, but of the first part of the *divided* article.

(3) W, or 'MS. Book W', is the latest of a series of notebooks which Bradley used to record the results of his philosophical reading and reflections. The earliest entry in W presupposes the publication of *Essays on Truth and Reality*, i.e. is later than 1914; and the book was still in use. The paging is on both sides and is continued to p. 78; and about seventy of these pages are filled with entries, closely written and remarkably free from erasures or corrections. There are notes amongst the entries, and drafts for the discussion and solution of problems drawn from almost every field of philosophical inquiry—psychology, aesthetics, ethics, logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of religion; and, in addition, critical studies, e.g. of Russell's *Analysis of Mind*, Alexander's *Space Time and Deity*, Sir Henry Jones's *A Faith that enquires*, and Professor Parker's *The Self and Nature*.

There are references in A and B to pp. 22, 23, 43, 45, and 71-73 of W; and pages 43 and 45 are reproduced in Notes 11 and 12 below (pp. 665-7).

### NOTE 1

The question of relations, their ultimate nature and place in the world of reality and of knowledge, is obviously so large and so central that to deal with it satisfactorily would involve a treatise. This I naturally am not attempting in the present article. My object here is to be allowed not so much to justify as to explain. I find myself with a view as to relations for which I claim no originality, and which seems to me the only tenable view. . . . Even if faulty, that view, I venture to think, is instructive. And I hope that an explanation, however defective and even dogmatic, may be excusable.

[B, p. 1.]

### NOTE 2

This perfect experience, which is absolute truth <and> reality, cannot (as I have so often urged) be fully realized intellectually either by the understanding or by any form of intuition. It is the complete union not of one side but of every side of our being and experience. It is feeling, will, sense, and understanding in one. And though from any one side it can be approached and enjoyed, it cannot be fully there except from all sides at once in a way which, in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 633 and p. 635; and below, Note 8, pp. 658 and 659.

and for finite beings, is not possible. But this is the one 'ultimate' and criterion of truth and reality. And in this sense neither feeling nor relational experience is ultimate and final. But if you ask whether each alike is fundamental, a different answer must, I think, be given. For relational experience involves and depends on feeling in a way in which feeling does not imply or depend on relational experience. [B, p. 9.]

## NOTE 3

I will first explain briefly what I mean by immediate experience or feeling. I have dealt with this in *Appearance, Essays, and Logic*, to the Indexes of which I would refer the reader. [B, p. 2.]

## NOTE 4

I myself venture to think that everywhere, in the individual as in the race, this stage <viz. feeling> comes first in development. And I think that, as it comes first, it is free throughout from relations and so may be taken as pure. An awareness, say, of temporal and spatial diversity, as it comes first, does not to my mind wear a relational form.

This seems evident, if we agree that in relations in the proper sense a passage to and fro between the terms is implied. And to maintain that this is to be found in the first awareness of temporal and spatial diversity seems an untenable view. Hence, though to be clear as to the undeveloped form of space and time is (I admit) difficult, I consider this to be the more acceptable alternative.

If however we hesitate to affirm this, we must admit that, so far, where these <spatial and temporal diversities> are present, the whole experience cannot throughout be called pure. There will, that is, be parts of it where, within each, the character of the whole awareness will not be carried out fully. Of course I do not mean that the character of the whole is thereby vitiated throughout, for that would destroy it. What I mean is that within the fluid whole there would be clots, inside which the character of the whole would fail to be there—and something further would be there, though (apart from their 'insides') these, as all else, would be contained in and qualify the whole, and it them. [B, pp. 2-3.]

And if a difficulty is raised as to temporal and spatial experience, and how this can be there in a non-relational felt form, I admit the difficulty—as to this form. But that at worst only shows that the felt is never pure throughout. The oneness of the felt whole remains; only in it are diversities which *internally*, when you consider

that aspect of them, are not concordant with the general character. They, however, *as wholes* are so, and *are* felt detail each as a whole—the internal discordance being ignored. [A, p. 15.]

[For the 'passage' implied in every relation, see above, pp. 647–8.]

## NOTE 5

If you ask for reality, you must have that (i.e. feeling) at least, however much else you also have. The 'this', 'now', and 'mine' are irremovably there, or the 'real' is not there. This to my mind is so plain, that I don't know how to argue for it. Of course it is transcended, but still remains contained in whatever transcends it—so that the universe, if it could cease to be 'mine', however much else it is, would become unreal except as an abstraction.

From this we can arrive at once at a conclusive result. If the contents of feeling have the form that I have described, and if a relational fact has also the form I have shown, then a mere relation cannot be immediately experienced. Relations of course, like everything else, that is, are immediately experienced, but never as relations in the proper sense, simply and merely as such. Relations are nothing if not conjunctive; but what is merely conjunctive so far does not belong to immediate experience, and cannot in that character enter into feeling. And yet, since it is nothing if not felt, a relation enters into immediate experience as a self-contradictory abstraction.

Hence to talk about immediate experience of mere relations of various kinds as fact is to me absurd. The felt unity is there, and hence the *mere* experience of relations is not there as fact, but as an abstraction made by the understanding.

This view may be wrong; but to ignore it, and to talk about relations as given directly in our immediate experience, without (apparently) an idea that they [i.e. those who use such language] can be held to mistake abstractions for given reality, seems to me really remarkable.<sup>1</sup> [A, pp. 48–9.]

## NOTE 6

I have taken, and must take, as a fact the immediate non-relational experience of diversity and oneness in unbroken union. There are those, I know, who at least seem to deny this and to

<sup>1</sup> On the position taken here by Professor James I have remarked in my *Essays*, pp. 149 ff. To these pages I would venture to invite an attention which I think they have never received. [Note by the author.]

maintain that all unity of diversity is in the end relational; and that, except perhaps as a mere illusion, the above fact is not anywhere experienced. But, since to discuss rationally one must first understand, I cannot attempt to discuss their position. . . . I do not understand how any thinking person can maintain that in the objects, which in sensuous perception we take as one, the unity is throughout experienced as relational and that, say, in a green leaf the greenness and the other perceived qualities are not unified apart from relational couplings. I do not understand how emotional wholes are not experienced as one, or how their oneness can be reduced to experienced interrelation. I understand of course the thesis that all reality at bottom and in truth is relational, and that any experience to the contrary is in the end more or less illusory. But that the illusion should as an actual experience be apparently denied or ignored, this I confess is beyond me. And I must with regret so leave the matter.

I do not mean that the holder of a thesis is bound to explain everything which seems to look like an experience to the contrary. This is not my opinion. It is the apparent refusal to recognize any such experience, even as an experienced fact, <sup>1</sup>which I cannot think justifiable.<sup>1</sup>

I had hoped at least to learn from Mr. Russell's *Analysis of Mind* what view he takes as to an actual or possible experience of a non-relational union of oneness and diversity. But this hope ended for myself in complete disappointment. Mr. Russell does not even raise the question whether everything distinguishable has, in and by itself, reality. He seems to start, on the other hand, with the assumption that every mental fact can be analysed in the sense of being shown to be a relational complex—where, that is, it fails to be an atomic unit whether as a sensation or a relation. And of this enormous assumption he appears to be so sure that, when it fails to work in his hands, he (in this respect unlike J. S. Mill) believes that with another man it might work and that the fault so far is his own.

With regard to 'feeling' used to designate some whole of which we are directly aware—the contents of which whole are not unified by a relational framework, but qualify one another and their whole immediately—Mr. Russell feels himself justified apparently in treating any such view as negligible, even to the extent of ignoring its existence as an actual error. But in his own use of 'feeling' Mr. Russell not only seems to my mind to be inconsistent but even,

<sup>1-1</sup> which I think needs to be justified. [Correction added in pencil by the author.]

where convenient, to lapse into the very view which he appears to regard as a negligible error.

The question as to what makes the togetherness of this or that relation with these or those sensations (where they happen to be together in fact) is naturally ignored. But what surprised me was to find that Mr. Russell apparently fails to perceive that what has been called 'the problem of Inherence'—the question, that is, of a non-relational qualification—arises even with regard to the atoms themselves. Whether diversity and similarity, or either of them, are 'relations', I am unable to say; but, so far as they are such, they can hardly qualify the units except relationally and from the outside. But passing this by, if we aim at consistency we seem forced to take the ultimate units, whether 'terms' or 'relations', as simple—as mere 'qualities', free from the least internal diversity. But how a relation (or all relations) can be so taken as merely simple, I do not understand. And with regard to 'sensations', if these possess themselves either feeling-tone or strength (which apparently is the case), we have to ask if this diversity can qualify the simply one. If you take the qualification as internal and as non-relational, the whole ultimate assumption as to analysis seems forthwith wrecked; while, if you take the diversity as relational, and as so stuck on to the simple unit from the outside, you are in collision with what seems to be plain experience—to say nothing of the hopeless difficulty which arises with regard to the relatedness in fact of this or that relation with these or those units, of whatever kind they may be.

For myself, I consider that the use of fictions, however indefensible ultimately, is justified in psychology—so far as, and provided that, they work in explaining the facts. But I regret to add that I cannot find that, even if Mr. Russell were content to justify his analyses on this ground, there has been any success gained by the use of his principles such as seems to justify their ultimate unsoundness. [A, pp. 6-8.]

#### NOTE 7

Take a relational situation and examine it.<sup>1</sup> You cannot say that the terms are the relation or the relation is the terms. And you cannot say that the real fact is the relation and the terms; for obviously that is not enough, since the fact goes beyond a mere 'and'.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ref. to *Appearance*. [Note by author.]

<sup>2</sup> 'Relatedness' here. Ref. for 'And' to *Logic* and *Appearance*. [Note by author.]

The relation (even if it is one of diversity) must be between, and must couple, *these* terms; and the terms must enter into *this* relation, which so far makes them one. But when you ask as to the where and how of this unity as a fact, you find no real answer except a tacit reference back to that unity of immediate experience, where many-ness and unity are one, and to remedy the failure of which the new view came in. And when you go to the terms, you fare no better. You certainly cannot say that they are the relation; and you cannot even say that somehow they 'make' the relation, any more than you can say that the relation somehow 'makes' them. And it is not even true that *they* enter into the relation; for, as individuals, while entering into what is 'between', they must, to save the 'between', no less remain outside. . . . [B, p. 5.]

## NOTE 8

*Note by the editor:—*

According to the original plan of the article, it is clear from both A and B, this question would have been treated here. Thus (i) there is in A the draft for a 'Recapitulation' (cf. above, *Introductory Note*, p. 652) which runs as follows:—

'We have seen what is meant by immediate experience or feeling, taken as union of one and many. We have described its nature and shown that it exists unquestionably.

'We have seen that (it) is not an ultimate answer to (the) question as to what is real in the end. It does *not* (as it is) contradict itself; but it, as such, cannot keep its place. In finite beings in time there tends to be a clash; and when we try to mend this theoretically, then feeling does and must contradict itself, because it can't supply its "how"—even apart from practical collision.

'Hence relational experience. Its nature has been described, which does and must contradict itself since it depends on a unity, which is not relational, and hence itself by itself fails to be anything as a whole. It is a necessary and useful way of advance, but remains a makeshift.

'Feeling is more ultimate; but whether prior in time we agreed to leave doubtful, as also whether it ever was or is pure. Usually it is not pure, but contains relational matter—as "clots" merely.

'Hence neither is ultimately real. What is *that*, must contain, and also go beyond, both. This we may and do aim at, but cannot throughout verify in detail as fully reached and the sole reality of everything.'

And (ii) *approximately* the same order of treatment is followed in B, where the question 'whether feeling involves contradiction in its essence'

is discussed (and answered in the negative) not indeed—as the ‘Recapitulation’ in A implies—before the ‘abstract’ or general exposition of relational experience, but before the detailed criticism of the discrepancies it entails (cf. *Introductory Note*, p. 652).

But the author’s decision (cf. letter of 17 Feb. 1924 quoted above, p. 629, Note 1) to divide his material, so as to make of it an article in two parts, led to a modification of the original plan. It became necessary to put off ‘the discussion of some serious difficulties to the latter part’—and amongst them, no doubt, *this* ‘difficulty’ about feeling and its essential freedom from contradiction. Unfortunately, the second part of the article was never written; but the following extracts from A and B may be taken as rough indications of the lines along which his treatment of this ‘difficulty’ (and of other connected difficulties in regard to feeling) would probably have been developed.

What is to ‘understand’? It is to have the real as something before us as an object, so that our mind can pass, as to its diversity, from one of the many differences to another, and from each and all to the One, and from the One to each and all—and do this without thereby altering the real so as to make it to be another one and cease to be the same, in the sense of becoming a fresh one generally, or (more specially) by causing it (as we take it) to show a jar and a break in its continuity. . . .

But in what is felt, or experienced immediately, there is no question so far of ‘understanding’ in this sense. If we have one simple feeling (I do not ask if we ever do or can) no diversity would be there or could even be suggested. And, given that diversity, we may have, in feeling, so far no object and in any case no passage from this feature or aspect to that. We have simple qualification of each by the other, and all by the whole which they qualify, and there is hence no question of any intellectual contradiction nor any inquiry as to ‘how’. And if we reflect on this, still, so far as we keep to it, we meet with no difficulty. If and so far as we take it as it comes and is, the felt is ultimate and real. And it is ‘unintelligible’, so far, only in the sense that to try to understand it is to transform it into something beyond itself and something not itself.

I will not ask here whether, and how far, and in what sense the apprehension of a change in reality, the mere presence of an object for a self, and the experience of passivity and activity (these cannot be divided) already involve a transcendence of the level of mere feeling. What we are assured of is that practical collision, and struggle in what is felt, is what forces reflection, and makes it impossible merely to take as it comes the union of sameness and difference, the one and the many. And when change is felt as alteration, the passage beyond mere feeling has been made. That something should be

itself and yet not itself, and be both at once and in one, and combine the 'here' and 'now' with the 'there' and 'gone'—cannot be taken as real just as it comes. We have passed beyond simple apprehension. . . . [A, p. 2 and pp. 4–5 on loose sheets.]

Feeling satisfies us as long as it keeps its form and does not clash. We should never ask for understanding if it didn't clash. But it does clash, and therefore to seek a remedy by going beyond it is necessary. How and why does it clash? It clashes practically in life, and it must do *<so>* because we are finite beings in a world of change.

But is it even satisfactory as to its form? No: when we reflect on it, we see that it is not so, because its matter and form are not really connected, but only so in form. Hence it does not contradict itself while it remains mere feeling, but it does so when we have taken the way of ideas and ask for truth—*then* we see that, even internally, there was a necessity for a clash.

Contradiction proper may be said to belong only to the world of ideas and truth. It is the failure to take Reality as an ideal union of the One and Many without an internal collision. . . . Our remedy by ideas succeeds only so far as we do this, and we never succeed in doing this except partially—though partial success is a necessary way of advance. We seek also to remedy our failure by construction of beauty, but this is *not* truth. And we seek again to do this in and by intuition—but that again fails, except partially.

But in feeling there is no contradiction, because there is no attempt at analysis—with its separation of the One and Many, and the attempt to rejoin them otherwise (i.e. by ideas and truth), and the opening of the question of 'how' and 'why' and the problem of mediation. On the other hand in relations in the proper sense this analysis and abstraction are necessarily involved, and the question of contradiction is raised and must be faced. [A, pp. 51 *a* and 51 *b*.]

Experience (to repeat this) as immediate union of one and many (as above described) so far as it goes is ultimate, both as being there and as being irremovable. . . . And, so far as it goes, it is satisfactory. Unless, that is, . . . the diverse contents are or become such that they refuse to comply with the form, no criticism is possible. There is no self-contradiction, because there is no question of any 'how'—*<how>* this can be that and the whole everything. The 'is' is final and, so far as it goes, is enough.

But in the confusing<sup>1</sup> detail of finite existence, its medley and its refusal in practice to comply throughout with the form, a struggle

<sup>1</sup> ['Confusing' seems to be the word intended.]



must ensue, in which the form of immediate experience is helpless. And to live we are forced beyond it, and led to adopt more or less a relational way of knowledge. And this, though necessary and the one way of advance, is (I shall now go on to show), if you take it as ultimate truth, a self-contradictory makeshift. [B, p. 4.]

Well, but why not agree (i) that the mediated or relational view depends in the end for its unity on the unity of an immediate felt whole, and so far rests upon that; and yet (ii) like the immediate whole may and must be taken as an ultimate fact, with regard to which to ask if it contradicts itself is unnecessary and improper? Why not swallow also and equally this second undigested vital necessary? . . .

Now what I have said is that the felt as it comes, and so far as we keep to it, is real undeniably. It is not self-contradictory, nor is it unintelligible in the sense of refusing to be understood or as itself at once implying and frustrating a claim of the intelligence. It has (where not simple—if it ever is so) the features or aspects (or call them what you will) of diversity and unity in one. And you may attend to these, so as to recognize them as there, without altering them and without any analysis in the sense of applying the category of Whole and Parts. You can say that the felt combines unity and diversity, and does not do so analytically—but somehow otherwise, though positively.

At this stage (I have agreed) it is impossible to remain. This union of one and many (I have shown) is broken and torn in practical conflict and then theoretically. And so far as this happens, it becomes self-contradictory and (as above) unintelligible . . . and (if you will) no better than the relational view which follows. The difference is that this second view cannot be called a felt fact. The felt so far as relational (time and space) is not felt in a relational form, while the second view is obviously an attempt to satisfy a claim which it admits. It is provoked by the break-down of feeling in its unreflecting discord. It is an attempt, by analysis and the application in some sense of Whole and Parts, to take the immediate union in the felt *otherwise*, so as to satisfy our intellectual want—which it therefore recognizes and admits as a criterion of reality. This the first view does not do, so long as it is true to itself.

I agree that, so far as you describe the felt so as to analyse it and make a claim to have understood it (and to describe it, without so doing more or less, is not possible—though it is possible provisionally and subject to understood negations), the felt has ceased to be a felt fact. It has, so far also, itself become a self-contradictory

attempt to be intelligible and is on the same level, so far, as the relational view—i.e. the level of makeshift and fiction. But then it need not so be taken. It can be taken otherwise and yet as positive, whereas the relational view cannot be. *It* is an attempt to satisfy the understanding—or it is nothing—and, as such an attempt, for *it* to rest in the end on the mere felt is suicidal. But the first view (while, as a theory, it is equally suicidal) has behind it in a non-theoretical form the immediate fact; and so far as it keeps to that as merely immediate, as combining ('how' it does not understand) certain recognizable aspects, it is not suicidal, because making no claim to satisfy an understanding—the need for, and nature of, which it does not even (so far) recognize. . . .

[A, pp. 11–12.]

Feeling . . . combines the two aspects of 'one' and 'many' so as not to contradict itself nor to be rejected as unintelligible; but this holds only so long and so far as it remains pure and non-relational and non-reflective. I do not hold that, when and so far as we reflect on feeling, it can stand that<sup>1</sup> in theory, any more than it can remain in finite beings whole and secure in practice. I mean that, while it is merely itself, it makes no claim to be understood. It does not offer itself as intelligible, and so does not at once imply and ignore, and admit while in fact refusing to satisfy and frustrating, a demand of the intelligence—since, where there is as yet no question of any 'how' or 'why', and where and so far as there is no attempt to predicate,<sup>2</sup> there may be jar and struggle, but there can be no self-contradiction in any strict sense.

As soon as you analyse the felt, you so far destroy it as such. And in any attempt to describe it in words we tend perforce to adopt the attitude of analysis, and to surrender ourselves to the necessary form of the discursive understanding and apply to some extent the category of Whole and Parts. But this tendency can be resisted. We can attend to the diversity of its aspects (in union), and apprehend and recognize this as a positive fact,<sup>3</sup> and set this fact down truly and in a sense describe it. We can, that is, while describing, at the same time warn ourselves that our description must be taken throughout

<sup>1</sup> [After 'that' there is an illegible word of four letters (? 'long') in the MS.]

<sup>2</sup> [Cf. 'There is in the strict sense no predication here' (i.e. in immediate experience) 'for that implies a relation—just as, taken in the full sense, even distinction does so' (B, p. 2).]

<sup>3</sup> [The author may have intended the sentence to run: 'We can attend to, and apprehend and recognize, the diversity of its aspects (in union) as a positive fact.']

with, and subject to, a reserve. We thus can recognize in feeling taken as prior to distinctions and relations, already there that positive concrete character, that unity of the one and many, which distinction and relation and the whole way of ideas and discursive intelligence attempts to attain and carry out in its own manner, and at its later stage and level—though never in the end with complete success.

Thus the mode of union in immediate experience of sameness and diversity, of the one and the many, of the ideal and the real, can be taken as fundamental. It is not ultimate in the sense that we can remain there and be satisfied. But it is not as such false, because as such it makes no claim to be true; and as it ignores any question as to 'how' and 'why', it so far cannot fairly, while it remains itself, be rejected as unintelligible. You may say that it is, so far, not so much above or below, as it is outside of, falsity and truth.

It is otherwise with experience that is relational. That (we have seen) is beyond the stage where this can simply come to us as also that, and both diversities as One while their One is what it is as being each. It has become in essence reflective in the sense that, aiming to remedy a failure, it in effect admits the demand to reach truth; and because, offering an answer, it has raised the question of mediation and of 'how' and 'why', and has offered itself not merely as there, but as intelligible. It is inconsistent because (as we have seen), while it claims to have superseded and remedied the felt, it still rests upon that—or is dissipated, in the absence of any real Oneness<sup>1</sup> (*a*) within the relation itself or (*b*) within the terms which it unites. And an attempt to swallow whole a mass thus bristling with contradictions and falling asunder must thus end in failure.

[B, pp. 7-8.]

### NOTE 9

Nothing in the end is real but the individual; and the individual is unique and (at least in my opinion) there is in the end but one individual which is real and true. And it is individuality that everywhere we seek, and with this alone can be satisfied more or less perfectly in so far as its realization is more or less complete. And individuality means the union of sameness and diversity, the presence in all of the One and of the One in everything, with the qualification of each by the other throughout and of the whole by all and everything—so that there is no actual or possible other than<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Below 'Oneness' the MS. has 'individuality', which may have been intended as a correction.]

the One and, within the One, nothing can to anything else ever actually or possibly be merely other. And here, and here alone, can we escape from that self-contradiction which, everywhere short of this, is in varying degrees inseparable from our attempt to make the world intelligible. This is the claim inherent in feeling or immediate experience—a claim which we saw was not, could not be, there completely realized. And it is not merely to remedy our practical failure, but in the end to satisfy the same claim, that we are led to enter on the relational and discursive way of knowledge. Here we gain truth not merely useful, but real and increasing indefinitely—but never in the end free from self-contradiction, and stopping always and everywhere by its own nature necessarily short of that truth which has ceased to be other than, and different from, the true Reality.

[A, p. 20.]

. . . I would repeat first that every case of terms in relation is an individual and unique 'situation'—a whole, where any alteration on either side must affect the whole throughout and not leave that anywhere unaltered. There is no valid process, by which the opposite of this principle can be justified in the end. You can abstract legitimately, wherever such an abstraction is required as being serviceable; and any such abstraction is justified relatively and for its purpose, but not as such ultimately and absolutely. Of course it seems monstrous to say that the same relation cannot hold where the terms have become different, or that the same terms cannot as such acquire some altered relation. And it would be monstrous to insist on such a principle in practice, and to refuse everywhere to agree to what rests on a necessary abstraction.

And of course, again, to show in detail everywhere how the above principle holds of terms and relations alike, is, I agree, quite impossible. But once again I have to insist that an inability of this kind is not a ground of disproof, unless you assume that differences nowhere may be asserted unless the exact and particular point of diversity can be specified—an arbitrary assumption, the results of which have not, I imagine, been faced.<sup>1</sup>

To my mind there are in the end no such things as sheer sameness or mere diversity. And to my mind, again, every actual relation is a situation, which is an individual whole—which any kind of analysis and abstraction must, in the end, more or less falsify as such. On the other side, if we are to understand, the way of abstraction and analysis is necessary, and it is justified or not in any particular case according to what we gain or lose by it theoretically. And hence I

<sup>1</sup> See *Appearance*. [Note by the author.]

see no advantage in taking cases, where identity or difference between relational wholes is on either side denied or insisted on. The answer in every case is the same—that whatever serves best is justified, and may be taken as true relatively and so far as it serves best for a certain purpose. [A, pp. 22-3.]

## NOTE 10

Relations would be merely internal if, the terms being taken as real independently, each in itself, the relations between them (as a class, or in this or that particular case) in fact arose or were due merely to the character of the terms as so taken.

Such a view has truth in it, so far as it denies mere externality and, again, recalls the fact that every relation rests on a unity taken as an immediate whole, and again insists that any change in the internal character of the terms must (in some sense) alter also the relation. But, in going further and in denying wholly the external character of relations, it obviously to me either ignores or denies wholly the fact of relational experience—or else, while keeping it ostensibly, asserts of it what involves a destructive self-contradiction.

How far such a view has ever in fact been advocated, we need not consider. The attribution of it to Hegel rests, I should say, on a misinterpretation. We meet it nowadays as the consequence taken to follow from a foregone alternative between external and internal relations, the idea of neither being in the end true being at the same time ignored.

[A, p. 39: the first sentence has been inserted, in accordance with a note by the author, from an earlier draft in the same notebook.]

## NOTE 11

'Relations are external only in abstract mathematics, in which the terms can be ranged side by side, and united by a sign which symbolizes their relation, without in any way modifying them. The number 8, for instance, will always remain the same number in all the relations in which it can be placed to other numbers:  $8 \times 4$ ,  $8 + 3$ ,  $8 - 5$ ,  $8 \div 2$ , &c.' (Aliotta, *The Idealistic Reaction against Science*, pp. 336-7.)

This, if I remember rightly, is a going back to Hume's relations of ideas and matter of fact.<sup>1</sup> It's obviously plausible, and yet is untenable. The '8' remains the same number only so far as you abstract it—that is, if by 'same' you mean 'not different' simply.

The real difference is that in some cases you cannot show that

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. Note 12.]

and how a number, or a body in space, is altered by change of relation, and in others you can. In the first of these classes you can only prove that it must be so because the opposite is not possible.

In ideal construction you say that  $6+2$  and  $9-1$  are the same, and that 8 and 9 are different. The identity and difference are relations. Are they merely external? Then why one and not the other? Is it mere chance? And, if so, how and why predicate the result of the terms? Are they merely internal? Then how and why can you have the terms without them; and how and why one special arrangement rather than another, and apart from all the rest that are possible? You must have at least an ideal 'And' or 'Together', and that is external.

You cannot *show* the difference to the terms, but you prove it thus:—

Is there a difference or not? If none, the result is nothing. If any, where does it fall? If outside the whole, then (once more) nothing. If inside, then *where*? You cannot say. But, if inside and not elsewhere, then surely in the terms. And, if not, by what right do you predicate it of the terms? The conclusion therefore is that there is always a difference, and one *to* the terms; but that in some cases you can for certain purposes abstract from it more or less wholly, and can in other<sup>1</sup> cases more or less *see* it as affecting the terms.

[W, p. 43.]

To appreciate the doctrine of 'external' relations, take the case where you have identity or equality, or more and less or inequality or diversity in general. Say you have ' $5+1=6$ ', or '6 does not equal 7', &c., &c. Here the relations are to make no difference to that of which they are predicated.

If so, is it a matter of pure chance *which* you have? Why one here, and not the other? Why not both at once? How can contraries exclude or be incompatible, if they make no difference—if one being there makes no difference to anything? And is it not monstrous to predicate, if this (whatever it is)<sup>2</sup> makes no difference to anything?

The answer is: 'But where *is* the difference? After all, 6 remains 6 throughout all its diverse contexts—one and unaltered.'

I reply: 'Yes, so far as you abstract and keep to your abstraction; but this is (*ex hyp.*) just what you *don't* do when you predicate. And so far as you *don't*, it's false that the "6" is one and the same simply.' To reply, 'If so, analyse and show exactly how it is affected (i.e. abstract the various affections, and show them as abstracted)', won't

<sup>1</sup> some [MS.]

<sup>2</sup> if this whatever it is (or *all* is) makes [MS.]

do, because I don't pretend to be able to analyse anything without residue.

And if you object 'Yes, but you admit yourself that there is an identical "6" in itself, of which you predicate alteration', I reply that I don't do this. There is no number at all apart from the context of other numbers—the whole world of number. And, more generally, no abstract element is anywhere as such real apart from some context ('And', 'Together', &c.).

And if you urge 'But then the "6" actually *is* whatever you can anywhere predicate of it'—this is not so. It is so, if you take the whole world of its possible predicates as actual. This is another further question I don't raise here. But what you predicated *as actual* was of the '6' *here*, under such and such conditions, *as actual* (whether as the abstract '6', or the '6' as specially here in ' $5+1=6$ '). Actual and possible have got to be distinguished.

Of course all the above becomes far worse, if a term can be related to itself. [W, p. 45.]

#### NOTE 12

No relation is *merely* intrinsic or external, and every relation is both. A relation may be called one or the other, according as its 'why' is supposed to be present and known or not; according as we have the individual whole, in and by which the relation holds, or fail to have it; and according as (to put the same thing otherwise) we can suppose the relation possibly absent. The appeal may be to a given perceived whole, or to an understood one. In neither case can it be sufficient to make the relation merely 'intrinsic'. [W, p. 43.]

Every relation . . . is both external and internal, and cannot be merely either. But still, taken relatively, this distinction is tenable as extrinsic and intrinsic, or as accidental and essential. (See Alexander, *S. T. and D.*, vol. i, pp. 249 ff.)<sup>1</sup>

It is tenable just so far as we are able to presuppose an 'individual' with a certain character, and (depends upon) whether in this character the relation is taken as included or is only super-imposed and contingent. It is plain that, in one case, for an individual to enter into certain relations belongs to his character and that, in<sup>2</sup> others, the entry depends on circumstances which fall outside that. But obviously this distinction holds just so far as you are able to take in the individual a double nature—an essence and accidents. *He* must everywhere go into the relation—that is clear—but he may go in different respects, and so be affected, but *not* in his essence.

<sup>1</sup> For this distinction I refer to Alexander, though I do not agree with him wholly. [Note by the author.]

<sup>2</sup> with [MS.]

But this distinction is not tenable ultimately. For it goes back to the distinction of <the> original nature and the nature as qualified by the relation, with its two 'respects' and 'in so far'. . . . <And> the problem of a term with two 'respects' we found was insoluble. They can't qualify the term immediately; and, otherwise, the relational trouble breaks out insolubly inside the term, in the question how the part that goes into the relation is related to the part that stays outside.

[A, pp. 23-4. Some sentences have been inserted from p. 43 in accordance with references given by the author.]

This distinction <of Extrinsic and Intrinsic, Accidental and Essential, &c.> underlies Hume's distinction of relations of mere ideas and of matter of fact. In the first, you go from the mere ideas themselves to the relation, which therefore doesn't depend upon circumstances. In the second, you have a set of circumstances, in which you find a relation—which, therefore, you may or may not find in another and different set. Now it is not true that from two mere ideas you can logically develop a relation between them; for that conclusion requires a further premise, in the form of a whole to which they belong. And it is not even true that, without a further premise, you can even analyse, and show a relation within, one single idea.<sup>1</sup>

What is true is that, in one (*first*) case, you have all you want for a valid conclusion in the abstract and that, in the other (*second*) case, you have not—since 'matter of fact' implies always the presence of that which defies complete analysis, and leaves your further process at the mercy of some unknown and irrelevant factor. [A, p. 24.]

Recall here Hume's view. This is false on both sides. It is true that with mere ideas you may have all the knowledge you want, and with matters of fact not so. But it is false that you ever can go anywhere from one idea or more as simply themselves. Everywhere (*a*) a whole is involved, and everywhere (*b*) you abstract and your conclusion is abstract. It never can reach ultimate truth and reality. It never is true of *that*, since that is individual. And what in that falls outside your conclusion will therefore, so far as unknown, remain mere 'circumstance', 'matter of fact', and (if you will) mere conjunction. And so far as you abstract, you *can* go from 'matters of fact' to others—and you can't go otherwise. What is once true is always true, and otherwise is *not* true. But with matters of fact it's harder to abstract from mere circumstances, as you can't construct.

In both cases alike you are therefore left in the end with mere

<sup>1</sup> See my *Logic*. [Note by the author.]



circumstance and conjunction, because you cannot fill in *all* the conditions in either case. Even when you construct, you don't know exactly what 'whole' you use, and can't say exactly *how* your conclusion is real. Intellectual intuition seems (even so far as possible) no solution, as it remains ideal only and therefore abstract and therefore subject to circumstance and conjunction.<sup>1</sup> The only absolute truth is in an Absolute Experience which goes beyond truth.

[A, pp. 45 and 47.]

### NOTE 13

Some relations (we naturally say) are the same each and either way. Others not so. This raises (the) question whether for a relation proper a 'way' is needed or not. If you say 'Yes, a relation is essentially discursive', then what is the 'way'?

(i) It seems certainly, so far, temporal. A relation seems to imply a passage, and a passage 'between'. Then, is there a backwards and forwards, and (are there) two directions, in *every* relation? Clearly so. Yet not in the same sense, since we have two classes of relation called 'symmetrical' and 'asymmetrical'. We may say perhaps that, while in all relations a passage is (involved),<sup>2</sup> yet in at least some relations the idea of passage and direction disappears, since that is not essential. In 'the relation' we abstract, and 'the relation' is an abstraction from our actual experience, and the temporal is dropped out.

(ii) But is every relation spatial? The question of how in the end we come to perceive the diversities in spatial perception comes in here, and is extremely difficult. Still, where order and direction essentially come in, is the difference here always spatial as well as temporal?

Perhaps *for reflection* some spatial schema is used in every case; but I should say (it) not only is not, but never was, involved everywhere.

(iii) Then, again, is the difference of what comes in and what goes out in the self with its felt expansion and contraction to be considered as a possible ground of diversity—and also the teleological character of this (*Essays*, pp. 308–9)? I am inclined on the whole to say that not every relation involves a *spatial* character, except when in a highly reflective form. But *temporal*—otherwise.

[A, pp. 25 and 24 a.]

<sup>1</sup> [Facing this sentence, on the opposite page (p. 46) of the Notebook, the author added: 'An intellectual construction or intuition can't stand simply in its own right as there, and as being and containing all that's wanted for ultimate truth and reality.']

<sup>2</sup> concerned [MS.]

It is true that relations can be divided into two classes, and that in one of these classes order and direction are taken as implied while denied of the other. But in the end passage (and, with passage, order) must be taken as present in all relations.

In the class where passage is denied it is still present; and, though ignored, we abstract from it and it is still there. It belongs (we should say) to the situation, only when you take that as psychological; and it does not make a part of 'the relation itself'. But, when we ignore or abstract from what here is irrelevant, we have 'the relation itself'. And that contains no passage, and is single—in its character (that is) of an abstraction.

In the other class such an abstraction is not admitted or admissible. From the passage and order, taken as merely psychological, we still of course continue to abstract; but we none the less assert their<sup>1</sup> presence in the relation itself. And here obviously the relation itself is admitted to be dual—whether we still do or do not also attempt to maintain that it is single. [B, p. 19.]

There remains the interesting question as to how far the passage essentially involved in all relations is merely temporal, or whether it also everywhere must be spatial. This question would involve a discussion of the ultimate nature of the order and direction in time and space, and of the character of time and space as each first appears in experience. And even if I felt myself competent to deal with these problems, the space here would be lacking. But in any case I venture to think that our result as to the fundamental inconsistency of all relations would continue to stand. [B, p. 20.]

#### NOTE 14

I will take here (as instructive) an argument against Monism.

Asymmetrical relations are said to disprove Monism, because Monism rests on *simple* inherence as the only way in which there is ultimate reality.

The argument, if right, is improperly limited—because *any* relations, *if so*, disprove Monism.

But Monism does not rest on simple inherence as the one form of reality. It even (in my case) says that that form is unsatisfactory (see *Appearance*).

Monism (with me) starts with the above form, but shows that it does not satisfy a want, which is to be satisfied only when the above imperfect solution is developed so as to be made perfect.

Of course also it is possible to base Monism on a given ultimate

<sup>1</sup> its [MS.]

principle (such, e.g., as the identity of thought and will or, again, time and space in one) which will contain, as already there, all that is implied in asymmetrical relations. That, however, is not my view.

Again, if it is meant (that) Monism must be prepared to explain everything—that I reject altogether. There is no view, I think, which conceivably could explain everything in detail—and no reason why it should do so, in order to be true.

Again, if it is said that at any rate asymmetrical relations are as ultimate as anything else, I dissent. *They* imply inherence, which does *not* imply them. Feeling *contains* everything, which clearly asymmetrical relations do not. Even if you urge that in all feeling there is change and so asymmetrical relation (at least implicit), in the first place I deny the fact; and, next, in any case the feeling of change is subordinate to the whole felt aspect of oneness.

Of course, if there is no unity which is non-relational or super-relational, then (I agree) there is no final unity of any kind and no Monism. But what a monstrously false assumption! [A, p. 55.]

Of course I agree that to take the one reality as merely felt, or merely at the stage where qualities inhere non-relationally in their subject, is a fatal error. Obviously with this not merely one kind of relation, but every kind is left outside the real, and Monism therefore is impossible. But the assumption that every Monism in this way must commit suicide is to my mind untenable. Why, beyond the stage of relational development, there should not be a higher and all-inclusive reality, in which all contradictions are made good, I have always failed to understand. The demand to find this completed reality as a fact, and produce it and show it as fact to any kind of perception, to my mind is irrational. The criterion to my mind consists in the satisfaction of a demand. This is the criterion we all use, and all must use—unless we prefer to rest on arbitrary private liking. And if our main demand is satisfied by such an ultimate reality, and is not satisfied otherwise, that to my mind is enough. To object that it and its 'how' in detail are inexplicable is no refutation, unless you choose to assume that whatever is inexplicable is so far unreal—an assumption probably in your case inconsistent, and in any case arbitrary. If you could show that such a reality fails in its general character to meet and satisfy our ultimate demand, or again collides with that in principle, the case would be altered. But I have asked in vain for any evidence that such is the fact. [A, p. 21.]

Professor Parker, in his interesting and instructive chapter on Relations,<sup>1</sup> while pointing out that relational unity everywhere (a) presupposes and rests on pre-relational unity, contends, I understand, (b) that the relational experience is not in the end self-contradictory, because, while resting on the former unity and not superseding it, it is a fresh development beyond it and equally true. The reader will see that, while largely agreeing with Professor Parker, I am unable to follow him to his conclusion. For me, while the relational experience is less fundamental, yet neither of the two ways of taking the One and Many as one is in the end true and real. The contents of the feeling experience refuse to answer to the form; and, as we have seen, we are forced to transcend it.

And I may be permitted, perhaps, here in this connexion to notice the objection, adopted in the main from Mr. Russell and urged by him<sup>2</sup> as fatal to every kind of Monism. He assumes that every Monism must take the universe as throughout a simple unity of qualities or adjectives in and of a whole which completely determines them, and is bound (I understand also) in this way to account for and explain all its contents—which it obviously cannot do in the case of ‘asymmetrical relations’.

Now nothing, I agree, can be more obvious (<than> that not only some, but any form of relational experience is, on such a view of Monism, impossible, while (as a fact) it is undeniable. But for myself (if I may speak as a Monist) this from the first has been obvious, and I do not take the ultimate reality as above, and I had hoped that so much was clear; and further, as to claiming or admitting that Monism has to ‘explain’ everything, nothing could be further from what I hold. Such a contention to myself is ridiculous.

Hence, when it is objected against me as a Monist that all that I as such have a right to is the terms and the whole, while the order or direction is in neither—my answer is that *no* whole is really a simple whole, and in every whole are always conditions unexpressed, and that in these conditions falls the difference required here, and here is the reason why  $A R B$  and  $B R A$  are incompatible (that is, *when* and *where* they are so). In short, far from admitting that Monism requires that all truths can be interpreted as the predication of qualities of the whole, Monism with me contends that all predication, no matter what, is in the end untrue\* and in the end unreal, because and so far as it involves always and ignores unexpressed conditions.

[B, pp. 10–11.]

<sup>1</sup> [*The Self and Nature*, by De Witt H. Parker, chapter ix, pp. 212–73.]

<sup>2</sup> [i.e. by Professor Parker, cf. pp. 233–7.]

## NOTE 15

*Note by the editor:—*

At this point C breaks off. On the subject of Multiple Relations, however, there are two drafts, one in A and the other (containing a reference to the first) in B. Both drafts are reproduced below, since taken together they may serve to indicate the lines which Bradley would probably have followed in C.

Although the question of 'multiple relations' is referred to as 'this final point' (above, p. 649), there is some ground for thinking that, had C been completed, it would have included the discussion of one more subject. For in B (p. 4) the author draws up the following Plan or List of Headings for his treatment of relational experience:—

- '(a) State relational view abstractly.
  - (b) Show contradiction in detail.
  - (c) Show how it stands on immediate experience, while attempting to supersede it.
  - (d) Show how it can't be taken (as immediate experience is taken) as not unintelligible and not self-contradictory.
  - (e) It is not another ultimate form of unity (Parker).
- Then, more detailed questions about it—
- (i) Every relation is and is not the whole situation (Alexander).
  - (ii) Every relation does and does not qualify its terms, and so also reciprocally.
  - (iii) A relation may therefore be multiple indefinitely.
  - (iv) Every relation is (a) both external and internal, and again (b) may be intrinsic or extrinsic.
  - (v) Every relation is, and is not, capable of degree.'

Now this Plan is carried out in B (pp. 5–20), though not without considerable modification. Thus the treatment of the more general topics, (a)–(e), is run together. And, as regards the 'more detailed questions', No. iv (the treatment of which is in B far less adequate than in C) is merged with No. ii (and Bradley has accordingly corrected the 'iv' into 'ii' in the Plan); the treatment of No. iii is expanded so as to include a discussion of the singleness and duality of every relation; and No. v is omitted altogether. But, as the reader will have observed, the treatment of the 'more detailed questions' in C follows the Plan very closely—the only modification being that No. iv precedes No. iii. And since there is no evidence to show that the omission of No. v in B was intentional, we may reasonably conjecture that the First Part of the Article would have included a discussion of the question whether relations differ in degree. Accordingly the later and better of the two drafts, which A contains on this subject (cf. above, p. 651), is reproduced below.

## I. 'Multiple' relations.

Of course, if we assume that every unity of one and many is a relation, then (a) on the one hand we may go downwards, and—where we obviously have qualities united non-relationally, as (say) in a perceived green leaf—we may insist that one or more relations, though against all appearance, are there. Or (b) in the other direction we may insist that, since the unity of every kind of 'whole' is relational, therefore every complex is a relation; and (no matter how many terms and relations of however many kinds it may contain) it is, and must be, itself therefore *one* relation, to be called 'multiple'—e.g. jealousy.<sup>1</sup> Referring to my *Essays* for further detail,<sup>2</sup> I will only say that the initial assumption made here is false. We have seen that, so far from all unity being relational, a relation everywhere depends for its unity on what is not relational. And as to the conclusion, it seems to me not merely false, but to be in monstrous collision with obvious fact. [A, p. 26.]

Of course, if every complex must have some kind of unity, and if there is no unity beyond what is relational, and if a mere plurality of several relations is not a unity—it follows that the required unity of the diversity is one relation, which therefore is called 'multiple' because of the diversity which it unites.

The relation obviously is taken as the whole relational situation, in which also it is contained as a part, or again as a member of parts. And such a result, I submit, involves a self-contradiction. . . . Of course I agree that, in a relational situation, the same relation may recur (more or less) throughout, and may be called 'pervasive' and 'distinctive' and, if you please, 'dominant'. And, further, to call this a 'multiple relation', and take it as what gives unity to the whole situation, may perhaps (I am prepared to believe) be useful in practice—and, if so, I agree should be used. But that we have here an idea, which (however useful) is in principle self-contradictory, I hope to have made evident. [B, p. 18.]

II. *Every relation is, and is not, capable of degree.*

Do relations differ in degree? We have here, I think, once more to say 'Yes' and 'No', and to both assert and deny. The cause of this is the ambiguity (essentially inseparable from the idea of relation) which we have found meeting us everywhere.

A relation may mean the whole relational situation, or it may

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. Bertrand Russell, *Philosophical Essays* (1910), pp. 177 ff.]

<sup>2</sup> [Cf. *Essays on Truth and Reality*, pp. 303 ff.]

mean an abstraction from that; and the two are in principle so inseparable, that we are led blindly to identify them and so to contradict ourselves; or, by ignoring one, to embrace the other—whichever it is that we prefer.

And (so) to the above question my answer is both 'Yes' and 'No'. If you mean the 'situation'—*that* is certainly capable of degree. If you mean the mere relation, abstracted from the situation, my answer is 'No'.

One's first impression, no doubt, may be 'Yes'. For take (with Mr. Russell) similarity and difference, say between colours or shades of colour. The difference or similarity, when we pass from one to another, may in diverse cases be more or less; and, since these are relations, our conclusion seems proved. But on the other hand take equality (which also is a relation), and it is disproved. Or let us take adultery and homicide, each of which (like jealousy) is a relation, and note the more and less prevalence of each in various countries as a proof that both must have degree, though this is only recognized in one. And, finally, let us take two mixed collections of coins, and note that in one we have more cases of equality—which therefore shows that equality must be there in a higher degree.

But I submit that, whenever we speak of more and less, there is an underlying 'what', of which we assert this more and less. And for any rational discussion this 'what' must be ascertained.

And (to repeat the result anticipated above) I should say that, if this 'what' is taken as the relation in the narrower sense (as abstracted from the situation), the answer is that it is everywhere incapable of degree. It is there, or not there—and not more or less of it there, or even (in strictness) there more or less. And otherwise it is of course capable.

Let us take some cases of this 'otherwise', and ask there for the 'what'.

(i) This may be merely psychical, as say (a) the relative frequency of occurrence, or (b) the relative occupancy of my mental space or strain of my attention, or ((c)) the general emotional disturbance (shock), or generally the kind of emotional tone.

These (we should all perhaps agree) are not degrees of the abstract relation itself, and should not be taken as belonging to it properly.

((ii)) Take, then, the passage from one shade of colour to another, or from one colour to another, and the diversity in various cases of the degree of likeness or difference. Of what is this predicable except the relation itself?

I answer:—there is always an underlying identity there, though

not always explicit. When I pass from one red to another, there may be no difference in respect of colour. There are two cases and not two degrees of redness. When I pass from a pure to a dulled or whitened red, I pass from more to less red; and the 'what', of which there are degrees, is the red which underlies the process and the relation. When I pass again from red to purple, I can carry with me (more and) less of red, and there is more and less of diversity and likeness; but it is a more and less of red, and not of the mere relation—unless you take that as essentially qualified by the situation.

The same thing holds when I pass from one colour to another, where the underlying identity is colour, which may be present or absent in some varying degree. And, in the end, the 'what' underlying the change (whatever it may be) is always there; and it is that, and not the mere relation itself, of which there is more and less.

And we may (if we think it worth while) also note that a sense of change, and of resistance to change, may be more or less there at a stage when no relation in the proper sense is as yet experienced.

In short, when and so far as you do not (consciously or unconsciously) identify the relation with the relational situation, you have no right to speak of more or less of it. On the other hand, and so far as you do identify it, you certainly may do so. But whichever of these courses you take, you fail . . . to reach any view which is consistent with itself.

[A, pp. 27, 28, and 30.]



## XXXII

### REPLIES TO CRITICISMS, AND NOTES

1. Mr. Sidgwick on *Ethical Studies*.
2. A Reply to a Criticism (by Professor James Ward).
3. Note (in answer to Alfred Sidgwick).
4. Note (on an article by H. V. Knox).
5. A Disclaimer.
6. A Reply to a Criticism (by E. H. Strange).

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It has been decided, though not without some hesitation, to reprint the following *Replies to Criticisms*.

Polemics of every kind were increasingly distasteful to the author as life went on; and, though formidable as an opponent, he was only induced to enter the lists when he considered that not only his own reputation but some vital point or principle was attacked. It was then that often, in a few trenchant sentences, his own views came more clearly to light, or were at times more fully developed.

Chiefly for this reason, and for the sake of completeness, but partly also because old misinterpretations tend to recur, it has been thought well to reprint the following *Replies*.

#### I. MR. SIDGWICK ON 'ETHICAL STUDIES'

[First published in *MIND*, O.S. II, No. 5, 122-5. January, 1877.]

IN the last number of *Mind*,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sidgwick did me the honour to review my *Ethical Studies*. His remarks were on the whole welcome to me, for they showed clearly the necessity there was, and is, for some work of the kind. I am not surprised that my reviewer did not *see* that necessity: that he *felt* it I think his article shows. 'Really penetrating criticism, especially in ethics, requires a patient effort of intellectual sympathy', and I am sorry that such an effort should be made in vain. But that in this instance it has been so I should like to be allowed to show. I am prepared to go through the article point by point, but cannot

<sup>1</sup> *M. O.S.* I, No. 4, 545-9.

ask from the readers of *Mind* so much space for matters partly personal. Indeed, if the reviewer had confined himself to remarks of a personal or generally depreciatory nature, I would not have trespassed on their forbearance at all. As it is, I must ask leave to correct some misunderstandings which are calculated to prejudice my views by representing them to be other than they are.

And (1) I must impress on the reader that I disclaimed the attempt to solve the problem of individuality in general; and in particular that of the origin of the Self in time, and the beginning of volition. But so far as I have said anything, I will endeavour to show that it is not incoherent, as soon as objections against it are distinctly formulated. I cannot do so before. However, I may say that I have no quarrel with Determinism if only that view will leave off regarding the Self as a collection, and volitions as 'resultants' or compositions of forces, and will either reform or cease to apply its category of cause and effect. The problem, as Mr. Sidgwick states it, on p. 46 of his *Methods of Ethics*, I consider to involve a false alternative.

(2) The fact that when I speak of self-realization 'we naturally think of the realization or development into act of each one of the potentialities constituting the definite formed character of each individual' is not surprising, until we have learnt that there are other views than those which appear in the *Methods of Ethics* (72 ff.). And this we very soon do if we proceed. I have written at some length on the good and bad selves (*E.S.* vii); and on p. 161 = 146, I have repudiated distinctly Mr. Sidgwick's understanding of the term. I thought that I had left no doubt that characters might be partly bad, and that this was *not* what I meant by self-realization as = end.

(3) 'We may at least say that a term which equally denotes the fulfilment of any of my desires by some one else, and my own accomplishment of my duty, will hardly avail us much in a definition of the Highest Good.' Perhaps. But I emphatically repudiate the doctrine that the mere bringing about by some one else of anything desired by me is my self-realization. If the reviewer wishes the

reader and myself to believe that I put this forward, he owes us a reference. If it be meant as a *deduction* from my premises, he owes us an argument. He has given us neither; and, as I think, nothing but a sheer misunderstanding.

(4) Mr. Sidgwick must be aware that I have endeavoured to define self-realization as = end. He proceeds to remark, 'the question then is whether we gain anything by calling the object of our search "the true whole which is to realize the true self"'. I think we do: but then I have not left the matter here as my reviewer seems to indicate. That point of view is reached on p. 73 = 67, and the whole remainder of the discussion down to p. 81 = 74 is quietly ignored by him. I call particular attention to this.

The passage on Hedonism which follows I will take hereafter.

(5) I do not know whether in what is said about Kant there is an objection to my views, nor, if so, what that is; but when the reviewer says of me, 'he accepts a merely relative universality as a sufficient criterion of goodness', I must remark that this is what I do *not* say. I say relative *and* absolute (192 = 173-4); and this appears even from my reviewer's next page.

(6) 'Mr. Bradley, I think, has not clearly distinguished this view from his own; and the effectiveness of his argument against Individualism depends chiefly on the non-distinction.' The view is 'the old doctrine . . . that the individual man is essentially a social being'. But (a) if my view is partly the same as another, what is that against it? (b) If Mr. Sidgwick will point out confusion, I will admit it or answer it. I cannot do either until he does. (c) At any rate, 'that the individual man is essentially a social being' *is* my view, and is *not* my reviewer's. If it be 'a vague and barren ethical commonplace', yet in his book he must be taken to deny it, for he finds the end and, I suppose, the essence of man by examining a supposed 'single sentient conscious being'.<sup>1</sup>

(7) 'He allows . . . even that "open and direct outrage

<sup>1</sup> *Methods of Ethics*, p. 374.

on the standing moral institutions which make society and human life what it is" may be "justified on the plea of overpowering moral necessity". Here I must earnestly beg the reader to consult the context in my book (226-7 = 204-5). I cannot ask for space to quote it. The question I was discussing was the extent to which *in theory* we must hold that collisions may proceed (cf. 157 = 142). On pp. 158-9 = 143 I distinctly denied that 'moral theory' is 'meant to influence practice' (cf. 227 = 205 footnote). And I do think this ought not to have been ignored.

(8) My reviewer continues—"But here he plainly comes into conflict with "unsophisticated common sense": and surely, if that authority be thus found *falsus in uno*, it must be at least *fallibilis in omnibus*: and thus we have still to seek for some criterion of the validity of its dictates." First, I must ask for a reference for 'unsophisticated common sense'. It is given as a quotation from me, but I do not recognize it. Next, I have maintained that I do *not* really come into collision with common morality, but, when understood, am at one with it (226 = 204, cf. 157-8 = 142-3). And my reasoned exposition, ignored by the reviewer, may stand, I hope, against his 'plainly'. Thirdly, he argues, What is *falsus in uno* is *fallibilis in omnibus*. The falseness in this one thing I deny. Next, if I admitted it, I should like to see the steps by which the conclusion follows. Next, I have never hinted that the moral consciousness is *not* fallible in particulars. Mr. Sidgwick really should give references for what he attributes to me. Next, I deny that it is fallible in all points. Lastly, even if it were false throughout, I say we have *not* 'to seek for some criterion of the validity of its dictates'; for none is possible.

This is all I think it necessary to say in answer to that which my reviewer has urged against the doctrine I have put forward. The rest, which I have not noticed, I must not be taken to admit. And now, seeing that a large part of my book was directed against Hedonism in general, and one or two pages even against Mr. Sidgwick in particular,

I naturally hoped for some discussion of the matter. This is all I can find. 'The notion of Maximum Pleasure is certainly sufficient for systematizing conduct, as it gives us a universally applicable standard for selecting and regulating our activities. But it does not give us an end which can ever be realized as a whole, in Mr. Bradley's sense, that is, all at once: for obviously there is and can be no moment at which a "greatest possible sum of pleasures" can be enjoyed.'

First, as was said above, the reviewer ignores my interpretation of self-realization. Next, he suggests that my argument against Hedonism is that pleasures cannot be enjoyed all at once. True, that is *an* argument; but is it possible that Mr. Sidgwick can really believe that in other respects Maximum Pleasure answers to my conception of the end? This is so wholly at variance with the doctrine I hold that I confess I was not prepared for it. Thirdly, that the notion of Maximum Pleasure can systematize conduct and give a standard is a proposition I have formally contested. Mr. Sidgwick not only gives me an assertion for an answer, but by the way he introduces the assertion suggests to the reader that I believe it myself.

I can find no other defence of his opinions but the (unsupported) charge against me that I use rhetoric for argument, and that my apprehension of the views which I assail 'is always rather superficial and sometimes even unintelligent'. Those views I think should be securely founded, if they are to bear being defended in this way.

## 2. A REPLY TO A CRITICISM

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THE long 'critical notice' of my volume<sup>1</sup> in the last number of *Mind*<sup>2</sup> hardly pretends, I suppose, to be an ordinary review. It seems not to be an account or estimate of my work, but a mere attack on what the writer takes to be its

<sup>1</sup> *Appearance and Reality*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mind*, N.S. iii, No. 9, 109-25, by Professor James Ward.

fundamental errors. I am sorry for this, and I do not see what good can come of it. From a criticism which would teach me to question what wrongly I have assumed, or which from an admitted basis would point out my inconsistencies and defects, I have, I am sure, much to learn; and for any such criticism I am sincerely grateful. But an assault which is based tacitly on assumptions which I have rejected, or which consists in the mere assertion of doctrines such as I cannot fairly be taken either to be ignorant of or to hold—how is anything like this to be of use to me or indeed to any one? With this reflection I enter on the profitless task of a reply.

There are first (109) some prefatory statements about method which to me seem erroneous, but which, being mere assertions, I leave to themselves. Then, on p. 111, the actual attack is begun. The general nature of Reality as held by myself is called in question. My critic starts from a tacit assumption as to 'purely formal' truth. He seems unaware that any one could regard his doctrine as an exploded fallacy, or could hold that a truth, if purely formal, would be no truth at all. But on the same page he has also, I observe, made a reference to Hegel. He then (112) proves that the universe need not be 'an absolute unity', and that I at least have no right to say more than that it 'is'. The sequence of ideas seems here obscure, and the meaning may have escaped me, but I must deal with the arguments as rightly or wrongly I understand them.

First as to the 'is', my critic appears to assume that 'all determination is negation', and that hence I must qualify the universe negatively or merely by 'is'.<sup>1</sup> He does not ask if I share this belief about negation; and, to speak broadly, I do not, nor do I know why I should be taken to do so. My critic fails to seize the distinction between further determination within a universal and its limitation from without. And he brings out the familiar dilemma between what is 'conditioned' and what is 'clear of condi-

<sup>1</sup> I do not attribute to Mr. Ward the assertion that that which has no competing predicate must be simply 'is'. That of course would be a bare and naked *petitio*.

tions'. But of course the Absolute is that which contains its conditions, and in this sense only is unconditioned. So much at present for the mere 'is'.

Then as to the oneness of the universe I argued in this way. Here is the world before us and in us, a world full of content and diversity. To try to explain this away would clearly be foolish, but, as we take the world up, it contradicts itself. In that character, then, we must assume that our world is not true or real; and yet, because it is, it must somehow with all its diversity be real. But (I argued) it cannot be plural, for that is self-contradictory, and every division and distinction pre-supposes and rests on a unity. Hence we are forced to take the whole mass of facts as all being one in such a way as *also* and *without abridgement* to be free from discrepancy. And as to the word 'unity', that of course matters little or nothing. Now, how does my critic meet this position? His statement is so obscure that I must quote it.

'It would be absurd, no doubt, to talk of two universes, but the denial of plurality is only tantamount to the affirmation of unity when we are dealing with the discrete. To this, whether as one or many, the continuous is opposed. Thus it may be absolutely true that the universe is, and still remain an open question whether it is an absolute unity and not an indefinite continuum. No doubt the latter alternative is cheerless enough; but Mr. Bradley seems to be more or less vaguely aware that it is there.'

The statement about the denial of plurality looks rather like a naked *petitio*, but I pass this by. We have to deal (I have urged) somehow with the given mass of facts. Everything discrete or otherwise, the whole world of things and selves with all their contents and relations, we have on our hands. And Mr. Ward seems to assert that all this can, without any self-contradiction, be 'an indefinite continuum', that it is cheerless, and that of this I seem more or less aware. But what, as I understand it, has no meaning, has no power to trouble me. And the idea that the universe is 'an indefinite continuum' is to me meaningless or self-discrepant. A continuum, not one and identical in its diversity and diverse in its unity, is, in the first place, to

my mind, no continuum at all, nor do I quite understand how my critic is able to be unaware of this. As to 'indefinite'—whether it is meant to deny distinctions or limits or something else—we are not informed; but in any case it seems to increase the internal discrepancy. And, since this possible alternative to unity, which is to ruin my doctrine, is not brought into the light, I must without more detail dismiss it as self-contradictory or meaningless. The further remarks as to 'logical principles' seem merely to repeat the same dogma about 'form', or to imply further that I have assumed, without any argument, that there are not many Realities. This latter implication would of course be incorrect.

Passing next to the doctrine that Reality is one experience, my critic tries once more to show that for me Reality = 'is'. And the process is very simple (113). He finds that Reality and Being are at times not distinguished by me, and he concludes that *therefore* Reality (proper) cannot possibly mean more than Being (proper). But the principle which underlies this wonderful argument he does not state.<sup>1</sup> The notion that an idea can be taken as internally filled in, and that conceivably his author might hold this view, seems not to have occurred to him.

I have contended also that the universe is a perfect individual, perfection including a balance of pleasure, though as to the pleasure I pointed out that doubt is not quite excluded. My argument, right or wrong, was simple and an extension of what went before. If all phenomena, without abridgement, are to be consistent and one, then (I urged) they must be a complete individual and this whole must be perfect; because want of harmony between idea and existence, and again pain, must mean discord and so contradiction. Now with this argument, good or bad, I cannot find that my critic deals anywhere at all. He flies off instead (114) to a discussion on the ontological proof. The position I have given to this in my work, and the way in which I have treated it parenthetically, should have

<sup>1</sup> The assertion that for me the 'real' or the 'experienced' = 'that' seems to me baseless.



warned any one that I could not intend to rest my case on an argument in this form. All that I feel called on to say is that what I have written on this proof my critic does not appear to have understood, and that my plain argument, so far as I see, he has totally ignored. After some remarks on pleasure, the bearing of which I have been unable to perceive, he asserts that the identity of idea and existence does *not* mean 'the attainment and consummation of all ideals and ends'. Well, so far as the whole is concerned, I have tried to reason that it does and must. And until a better way is shown me, I have no choice but to put reasoning, even my own, before the mere assertion of how-ever great a metaphysical authority.

The conclusion so far, that Reality is a perfect individual experience, is naturally abstract. It certainly, if true, has cleared away a large mass of competing theories, though my critic appears never to have looked at the matter from this side. But the conclusion is abstract and so far not satisfactory. On the other hand, it is a principle applicable (I have argued) to every part of the universe. The idea of individuality, I have contended, can be, and is, used as the criterion of reality, worth, and truth. Since everything which at all exists must fall within Reality, everything in some sense is an element in a perfect individual. And individuality, we can observe, shows itself variously through the facts of appearance, and is found in varying degrees. From the space and atoms of matter to the highest life of the self-conscious self we can perceive a scale of individuality and self-containedness. Realized perfectly in no one part of the universe, the Absolute still is realized in every part, and it seems manifest in a scale of degrees, the higher of which comprehends the lower. And the system of metaphysics (I have added), which I have not tried to write, would aim at arranging the facts of the world on this principle, the same principle which outside philosophy is unconsciously used to judge of higher and lower. If this doctrine is not true, most assuredly it is not new, and some knowledge of it, I suppose, may fairly be demanded from any one who comes forward to speak on

metaphysics. Nor, again, do I perceive, when this principle is worked through the various aspects of the world, how within metaphysics we can look for anything more concrete.

But my critic urges that such a principle remains 'purely formal', 'the matter remains absolutely indeterminate and the form is a purely logical framework' (114), or this 'absolute knowledge is form simply'. And he implies that such knowledge is not knowledge of the universe. If I had said that Reality was a perfect Will containing somehow within itself a plurality of finite wills, and if this principle were argued to be applicable to the various aspects of the world—would that also, I wonder, have been formal merely? But I am not told what it is that my critic expects from metaphysics. So far as I see, he argues downward from two assumptions.

He seems to believe that, without applying it to the concrete facts of the world, I ought to deduce straight from some abstract principle my ultimate conclusion. But he does not exhibit any warrant for this bare preconception. And when (113), after a sort of appeal to Hegel, my critic assures me that to 'place the spirituality of the real beyond question . . . is what we want as a first step towards idealism', he seems, in criticizing me, to bear witness against and to judge himself. For he appears to start from a sheer *a priori* construction of 'idealism'.

And the assertion as to pure form is surely once again the merest dogma. Mr. Ward seems to offer a dilemma. Absolute truth (apparently) is to be a 'determinate positive knowledge' which has to 'co-exist along with' finite truth (115), or else it is 'form simply' and 'a purely logical framework'. But this division of form and matter is precisely that which he has to prove against me, and to urge it as if in philosophy it were an undisputed axiom seems a strange procedure. Does the physical analogy from a material frame and what fills it hold good? Are the general character and the detail two factors more or less indifferent to each other, and of which either can be anything apart from the other? Is it conceivable that knowledge could be

made up of two coexisting morsels? Is God (if we like to put it so) *either* an indifferent 'framework' in which individuals are somehow stuck, *or else* one 'morsel' in an undigested mass which somehow coexists in (or without?) some stomach? And would it not be better if my critic addressed himself to the discussion of such points, instead of simply assuming against me as true what he surely might know that I reject? To me the idea that detail is *not* determined by its general character is irrational, that finite truth or being should 'co-exist along with' what is absolute is unmeaning. To me, of course, there is *no* truth which is not the knowledge which the Absolute has of itself. The distinction which I have drawn in my last chapter amounts to what follows. *All* truths are in various degrees imperfect. Finite truths have other truths falling outside which modify them; and, however much knowledge is organized, it never can be the perfect systematic totality of its detail. But the general character of the whole has, on the other side, no truth falling outside it. It is not one member in a disjunction, because any disjunction must be the specification of itself.

Now this whole doctrine may of course be mistaken in principle. I have failed, I know well, to grasp it and carry it out as it should have been carried out. Nay, if I had been able to keep closer to a great master like Hegel, I doubt if after all perhaps I might not have kept nearer to the truth. But when I am assailed to-day with the same dogmatic alternatives, on the criticism of which long ago Hegel based his system, and when these seem blindly urged as axioms removed from all possibility of doubt, my own doubts are at an end. For even if Hegel's construction has failed, Hegel's criticism is on our hands. And whatever proceeds by ignoring this is likely, I will suggest, to be mere waste of time.

From this point onward I can deal more briefly with my critic's objections. I showed that in our psychical experience the various aspects point to a superior whole above relations, and that this whole in an imperfect form appears before, and still persists below, the relational consciousness.

I was certainly wrong in employing (I hope not more than once or twice) the word 'intuition'. It was a misjudged attempt to assist the reader, and I left no doubt that the whole was not merely perceptual or theoretical.

My critic meets me (116) with bare assertions. Feeling could only be mere being without diversity, it could suggest only continuous change—both of which assertions I of course deny. It could not always be called 'a finite centre of experience'—to which I of course assent if he means *for itself*. Then Mr. Ward seems surprised and shocked that a principle in development should appear first in a less differentiated form. Then he states that for me differences are absorbed by an empty Reality, as, on the next page, he asserts that for me all finite content is destroyed in the Absolute—ignoring the fact that I, rightly or wrongly, have at least insisted on the opposite. Then I am assured without a reference (117) that I make mind a mere logical *summum genus*. And, because I say of the theoretic and other aspects that they are factors among which none has supremacy, and, speaking of the Absolute, add 'how these various modes can come together in a single unity must remain unintelligible', I am asked 'How can we talk of life if there is no supremacy and no subordination, or if its unity is to result from "factors" *coming together* for the purpose?'<sup>1</sup> But this question (so far as I understand it) does not seem to concern me. And when Mr. Ward proceeds (apparently) to take my words 'and *how . . . unintelligible*' in the sense of *that . . . inconceivable*, I confess that once more I am at a loss for a suitable reply.

We come now to the connexion of finite centres of experience with the Absolute. The introductory paragraph (118) seems obscure, and I cannot pretend to have understood it, and it is therefore most unwillingly that I am forced to notice it. So far as it means that there is a serious difference between finite centres on the one hand and mere aspects of one centre on the other hand, I naturally assent to it. But the paragraph appears to imply very much more

<sup>1</sup> The italics are Mr. Ward's.

than this. I of course should not admit that unity and identity are mere relations, or that unity is possible without identity. But I do not know if either of these statements is implied. The questions asked as to the identity of and difference between the universe and reality and experience I have failed to understand. Perhaps they put once more the points which I have dealt with already; and in any case from my point of view they seem to be meaningless. But all that I am certain of is their great obscurity.

Then follows a supposition as to what I hold concerning finite centres. It is not a correct supposition, nor does it even seem to be offered as correct, and I am hence not forced to examine it closely. It involves what the reader of my work can see I regard as contradictions. There is, however, a statement (119) which I cannot pass over. 'To all finite centres, it will be remembered, there pertains a felt reality; and *that is not appearance*.'<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ward has misconstrued the passage to which he refers, and surely I have committed myself fully to the doctrine that without exception every element in the finite is appearance. Anything like an acceptance of the reality of Monads would, I believe, reduce my work in principle to a mass of inconsistency. 'Ideality', I think, and 'appearance', I am sure, are used against me in senses different to that which I have given them. And when I 'admitted' (*A.R.* 430 = 485) 'that some appearances really do not appear', what I admitted was that I (like many others) use the word 'appearance' in a sense which (if you please) is arbitrary, and that to appear does not necessarily imply appearance to some percipient. The passage is a reply to a criticism made, I think, by Lotze, and I am not convinced that it is really very hard to understand.

✓ Passing on I find my critic still astonished. If appearances apart from Reality are nothing, and if in the end the 'how' of appearances is inexplicable, he urges that they cannot be the 'revelation' of Reality. But I am not aware that revelation must mean total manifestation perfect in

<sup>1</sup> The italics are Mr. Ward's.

every point where the whole is revealed. And if Mr. Ward will make inquiry he will find, I think, that he is merely trying to strain language. But he seems to approach the whole matter with fixed preconceptions. I have mentioned (*A.R.* 458 = 517, 415 = 469) various facts which in the end I cannot explain. Amongst these the fact of finite centres takes a place, though not the only place. And this, I suppose, is contrary to what my critic feels he has a right to expect. I have argued that a mere inability to explain in the end 'how' a thing can be forms no valid objection to our assertion 'that' it is, if we have good reason on our side and on the other side nothing. Of this vital and reiterated argument Mr. Ward takes absolutely no notice. He doubtless finds it easier to refute me by distorting my meaning, and by taking 'how' at his pleasure in the sense of 'that'. That a revelation can be imperfect and yet genuine is to him a thing strange and unheard of. And he seems possessed by the idea that I am bound to explain and deduce everything. But I cannot consider myself in any way responsible for his disappointment.

On the next page (120) my critic pursues the same path. After some statements and some implications as to the process in Reality, parts of which are incorrect, he urges that process within the Absolute is but appearance, not true as such, and he asserts that *hence* it is 'pure illusion'. I have of course argued that appearance, though error, is partial truth, and is therefore *not* pure illusion. This contention doubtless may be mistaken, but a criticism which ignores it is surely not criticism at all.

The following page repeats with variations the same idle procedure. I have tried to show that time and change in their own character are appearance, but that (how in detail we do not know) they are corrected and preserved in a higher whole to which they minister. Once more, totally ignoring that on which I have insisted, my critic represents me as holding that time and change are reduced to zero. And, not content with this, he even allows himself strange liberties with my statements. The extract from p. 194 = 220 taken from one context is without a word

applied to another. And when (with a reference to 185 = 210) I am said to make an attempt which I myself style illusory, I reply by asking the reader to see for himself what attempt I really spoke of, and to save me the task of qualifying Mr. Ward's method of attack.

The mere illusoriness of phenomena (which in fact I do not hold) I might, it seems, have avoided, if I had not strained myself to escape from the pre-eminence of will (122). The history of philosophy since Kant does not wholly tend to support that hypothesis. And I am offered a dilemma between something like the pre-eminence of will and a belief that all changes 'are but events and not acts'. This ready-made alternative (we have known for years) exhausts for Mr. Ward all possibilities. He is forced to see, and he even admits, that I do not assent to it, and yet he has no resource but, without any discussion, to charge me with incoherence. But is it criticism to judge an author from preconceptions which he is admitted not to accept? And then my critic seriously represents me as holding a doctrine quoted as to goodness and immortality, when on the same page (382 = 432) I plainly disconnect myself from it, and in part criticize it again on p. 450 = 508. That this extract from my work, the only one quoted for approval, should be put forward in spite of myself as my doctrine is characteristic. It is even more significant that, *if* this doctrine *were* mine, I should be blindly re-asserting it in the face of Hegel's elaborate criticism. But what pleases me is that in my volume (450 = 508) this criticism actually is referred to.

On p. 123 the remark following the extract from my p. 29 = 34 may be commended in passing to the reader's attention. And, coming to that essential inconsistency of thought which I have tried to prove, my critic prefers to stand outside the discussion and once more merely to assert. And when (124) he crushes me with 'in what sense can a system be perfect, harmonious, and complete, when every constituent is not only partial but defective?' —he seems never even to have heard of the doctrine that, *unless* partial constituents *were* defective, they never could

be elements in a system at all (see my p. 374 = 422). But, even if that view could elsewhere be taken as unknown, or as what might fairly be ignored, it is here the very view which Mr. Ward is undertaking to criticize.

At the end of his attack (124) my critic remembers that something has been forgotten, the chapter on degrees of truth and reality. He has never understood that an appearance is rejected as simply false, only so far as it offers itself as simply real. He seems ridden by the notion that between appearances and the real there is a sort of wall. The idea that nothing is or exists at all, except so far as it is the one Reality, that this Reality appears and shows its character everywhere in a more or less imperfect form, and yet that nothing taken by itself can claim to be the Reality—any such idea plainly has never entered Mr. Ward's field of vision. And hence he is staggered to find that appearance after all has degrees. He asks in amazement how finite spirits are to use absolute Reality, as if finite spirits could possibly use or could be anything else, as if outside the finite the Absolute were anything at all, and as if a principle must be employed explicitly or applied in a perfect form, or else, failing that, not applied and not used in any way. He once more roundly asserts that, when the whole is qualified non-relationally, this means that the relations are not added to, but extinguished. He does not anywhere even mention the fact that I at least insist on the opposite. And he ends with a sketch of my mental characteristics, which I am led to infer must be such as to account for and justify anything. When a man does not understand me at once, it is because I am unintelligible; when his statement as to what I hold contradicts itself, that is because I am incoherent; and when, suppressing one part of what I teach, he presents a fragment as the whole, he but does me the service my unhappy nature prevents me from rendering to myself. And this is all possible, but after all there is another possibility. If that idea could have been able to suggest itself to my critic's mind, we might perhaps have been spared a controversy which (so far as I can judge) is wholly futile.



## 3. NOTE, IN ANSWER TO ALFRED SIDGWICK

[First published in *MIND*, N.S. xiv, No. 53, 148. *January*, 1905.]

IN the last number of *Mind* Mr. A. Sidgwick complains that he has suffered injustice. His attitude towards the new Gospel, it seems, has been misrepresented, and he seeks to deny my statement that he claims to be the champion of philosophic scepticism. As to the first point, how far he has been misrepresented the reader may decide; but on the second point perhaps I should offer a few words. In the article to which I referred (*M. N.S.* iii. 336-47) the reader, I think, will find that Mr. Sidgwick unquestionably takes the field as the self-elected representative of philosophical scepticism, and the doubt is merely as to the meaning to be given to this term. Certainly Mr. Sidgwick explicitly there rejects scepticism in one sense, and explicitly defends it in another special sense which I have noticed elsewhere. But these special senses, and in short the ambiguous detail of the article, are, I submit, here irrelevant. The words 'philosophical scepticism' were used by me in their ordinary meaning. And the real question is whether the scepticism which Mr. Sidgwick champions does or does not imply scepticism in this general sense. Does he or does he not advocate the main sceptical conclusion that no positive doctrine in philosophy is theoretically indisputable? As to his acceptance of this conclusion the reader, I submit, is left no liberty to doubt (see more particularly p. 339). And I thought it well perhaps to remark on the apparent coexistence of this position with a benevolent interest in our new philosophical creed.

If Mr. Sidgwick's intention was not to accept the main doctrine of scepticism, as commonly understood, he has of course only to state this, if indeed he is in a position to do so. And as his attack on myself showed to my mind little comprehension of my meaning, there is no reason, I presume, why I may not on my side have failed to understand his. But as to the person who in that case is most to blame

for the wrong of which Mr. Sidgwick complains, the reader must judge, if he thinks it worth while to do this. I should be sorry to have contributed to injustice, but on the other hand I could not accept responsibility for any divergence between Mr. Sidgwick's literary intentions and their execution. I should add that practically I am acquainted only with those writings of Mr. Sidgwick to which I have referred. And I must end with an apology to the readers of *Mind* for intruding on them with matters which perhaps have little but a personal interest.

4. NOTE, ON AN ARTICLE BY H. V. KNOX  
(in *M.* N.S. xiv. 210-20).

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MAY I be allowed to make a brief statement in reference to the article by Mr. Knox in the last number of *Mind*? This article purports to criticize my views on certain ultimate questions. The discussion of such final difficulties, and the attempt to solve them, is naturally to be found mainly in the latter part of my book. On the other hand, in the above article I see no reference to any page beyond the first quarter of the volume, and I discover no acquaintance with anything that comes later. To speak in general, where I have raised a difficulty and offered a solution, my discussion is not condemned as worthless (as perhaps it is), but seems taken as if it possessed no kind of being.

Out of several instances I will point to the most obvious. I published in *M.* N.S. v,<sup>1</sup> an examination of the nature of Contradiction. This (with omissions) was reprinted some eight years ago in my book, and, under the heading 'Contradiction and the Contrary', its existence is visible in the table of contents.<sup>2</sup> But in the article, in which Mr. Knox now controverts my view of Contradiction, I find no

<sup>1</sup> ['The Contrary and the Disparate'].

<sup>2</sup> [*A.R.*, p. 500 = p. 562].

reference to that which presumably he must know is my professed discussion of the topic. Its contents and the very fact of its existence seem taken as things which are nowhere in the world. See especially pp. 213 and 218.

I could adduce other instances of what appears to be the same procedure, but one perhaps is enough. And to myself, though possibly not to others, the whole thing is inexplicable. I am not, I hope, under much illusion as to the defects of my volume, and on this special subject it will be a disappointment to me if it has to contain my last word. On the other hand, I perhaps need explain no further why, without denying the merits of Mr. Knox's article, I have been unable to find in it much which concerns me personally.

## 5. A DISCLAIMER

[*First published in the JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY*, vol. vii, p. 183.  
*March, 1910.*]

THE too flattering notice of myself by Professor James, in the *Journal* (January), contains a statement which I think I should ask leave to correct. Professor James credits me with 'breaking loose from the Kantian tradition that immediate feeling is all disconnectedness'. But all that I have really done here is to follow Hegel. In this and in some other points I saw long ago that English psychology had a great deal to learn from Hegel's teaching. To have seen this, and to some extent to have acted on it, is all that common honesty allows me to claim. How far Hegel himself in this point was original, and how again M. Bergson conceives his own relation to post-Kantian philosophy, are matters that here do not concern me. I write merely to disclaim for myself an originality which is not mine. It belongs to me no more than does that heroical perversity or perverse heroism with which I find myself credited.

# 6. A REPLY TO A CRITICISM BY E. H. STRANGE (*M. N.S.* xx. 457-88).

[*First published in MIND*, N.S. xxi, No. 81, 148-50. *January*, 1912.]

I CANNOT but feel honoured by the space which is given in the last number of *Mind* to a criticism of my views. And I should like to be permitted to offer some remarks on this criticism. I find myself, however, here in a difficult position. So far as my own views have been misapprehended, I could hardly make this clear otherwise than by an attempt to re-state them throughout. And again so far as Mr. Strange argues from a position which I reject, I should not feel myself justified in dealing with that position as it is left in his article. All that I can do, therefore, is to attempt to indicate briefly a series of apparent misconceptions with regard to the doctrines which I hold.

(1) Mr. Strange apparently takes me to identify feeling with reality. Everything, I understand him to say, arises out of feeling and returns into it. This, of course, is to me a fundamental mistake for which I am in no way responsible. The mistake runs through and vitiates a large part of Mr. Strange's criticism. It is another side of the same error when I am told that for me feeling is indisputable and beyond criticism. I am unable to do more here than once more to express my surprise.

(2) I am further taken to limit the actual to a series of momentary and fleeting psychical events. I cannot think that my critic has the least idea of what to me is the position of events in time, or again of psychical existence and mental facts of the moment, and of how all this to me depends on ideal construction from the basis of immediate experience. He evidently takes mental facts as being for me something which in their own shape are ultimately real (488). The only answer which I can make here is a general reference to what I have written on the subject. Again (482) I am offered a dilemma on the ground that I deny 'that the soul is existent'. I however thought that what I

held was that the soul is existent, and that its existence involves inconsistency. How could I possibly deny the existence of the soul?

(3) The assertion that I identify feeling with 'the self or individual' (464-5) once more causes me surprise and prepares me for anything or everything in the way of a conclusion. But I pass from this to notice the argument (465-6) that, if my doctrine as to feeling were true, I at least could not know this. Mr. Strange is apparently unaware that I have myself raised this objection and tried to deal with it (*A.R.* 79-80 = 93, 95 = 110, and *Mind*, No. 69).<sup>1</sup> What I have written here may be worthless, but how can my critic claim a right to treat it as having no existence?

(4) With regard to my alleged failure to recognize any act or subject in judging, and my inability to distinguish myself from other selves, I will merely refer to what I have written on these heads,<sup>2</sup> and will pass on to another misunderstanding. When I speak of using content as 'loose', Mr. Strange takes me to mean that this content in fact is removed and that the actual fact is destroyed (472-5). He does not argue that this is what I *ought* to hold, but treats me as holding it. I am aware of no justification for this interpretation except that the result is of course ruinous to myself.

(5) On page 478 there is a passage which I notice because it exemplifies a common misapprehension. Mr. Strange, like some other advocates of realism, fails to understand the position which he is anxious to attack. The contention which he has to meet is this, that he is taking a mere abstraction for reality, and that the burden of showing that what we contend is an abstraction is really more rests properly with him. Such an idea seems not to have occurred to him, but he will find that it is perhaps more worth his attention than the ingenious arguments which, I must acknowledge, he does *not* attribute to myself. In the same way I would add (though this has no

<sup>1</sup> [*M. n.s.* xviii. 40-64 = *T.R.* chapter vi.]

<sup>2</sup> On the second of these I have touched recently in *Mind*, No. 74, pp. 155-6 [see *M. n.s.* xix. 153-85 = *T.R.* chapter ix].

reference to Mr. Strange) that it is idle to advocate the ultimate reality of change, unless you at least consider the view that mere change is no more than an abstraction.

The above misconceptions, it seems to me, leave little value to Mr. Strange's article as a criticism of myself. Certainly my views may be no better than those which he has attacked, but at least they are different. But there are doctrines which Mr. Strange has incidentally laid down, which, if they were tenable, would render detailed examination of what I hold quite superfluous. As to that I am entirely of one mind with Mr. Strange. But he does himself here, I must think, a most serious injustice when he speaks (479) of his having 'tried to elaborate' his doctrine. That is precisely the thing which on the contrary I would invite him to do, for, as he has left it, I feel that I could not in common fairness to himself attempt to criticize his position. I wish to keep in mind that, if a view opposed to my own is untenable, it does not follow that I myself am not equally wrong; just as the pointing out of misconceptions may, I know, do nothing to remove real difficulties. But if Mr. Strange would seriously apply himself to such a statement of his doctrine as would enable the reader to see how it can hold against familiar objections, I venture to think that, far from losing his time, he would produce something which would be read with attention and interest.

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